A TREATISE ON ATONEMENT

BY

HOSEA BALLOU

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION BY

A. A. MINER

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INTRODUCTION.

BY REV. A. A. MINER, D.D.

The issuing of another edition of this work furnishes an opportunity for directing attention to the remarkable character of the work itself, and of its distinguished author. To judge that character, the circumstances under which, and the condition of the public mind in the midst of which, the work was originally prepared must be kept in view.

The volume was issued a dozen years before the author's removal to the city of Boston. He was then a young man. Living remote from all the great literary centres, and discharging the duties of pastor of several united societies in Vermont, he travelled somewhat widely in that and other States, proclaiming the "glorious gospel of the blessed God" to crowds of anxious inquirers. This, however, was the less inconvenient for him as he was a man of few books, and the principal of these, the Bible, was the constant companion of his travels.

It is at least an open question whether his lack of acquaintance with books was not one of the conditions of his originality and power. Certain it is that not a few men of his time, who had some glimpses of the

truth, and who had been trained in the schools, were altogether unable to break from their educational bonds. Books and teachers, regarded as servants, and welcomed as helps to truth, are well nigh invaluable; but, regarded as authority, and allowed to dominate the soul, they bind the free spirit in hopeless error.

No man ever entered upon his life work with a motive more single, or a purpose more sincere, than did our author. In the interpretation of the sacred Scriptures, to him, as they are to us, the priceless revelations of God, the query ever was, not what commentators have thought, not what the church in various ages has believed, but what the Scriptures themselves teach.

In solving this problem, he ever sought to give the Scriptures a full hearing. Biblical expressions which were made the catch phrases of the church, and the current imagery which was supposed to justify its smoking rhetoric, he never interpreted in a manner to violate fundamental principles of morality, or to dethrone common sense. Every biblical witness was cordially and reverently welcomed by him; but he felt called upon as an honest counsellor to cross-question the witness, interpreting one utterance in the light of another, that the witness himself might not be misunderstood, nor the great jury of human souls be led into error. It would be well for the church and the world, for Christianity and man's present salvation, were this biblical appetite restored, and were men encouraged to rely less on dogmatic speculations, and more on divine revelation.

The writings of our author have done much to exhibit the simplicity of Christianity. The ethical and logical confusion of the expositions of Scripture current in his day, and to a large extent still current, seemed to him an unpardonable folly, — unpardonable because the adoption of even a single principle of Christianity, rigidly followed and adhered to, would have made such folly impossible. Mr. Ballou believed what others only professed to believe. Misinterpretations were swept away by the simplest statement of the divine character as easily as fog is dissipated by the risen sun. All Christians professed in words that "God is love"; our author believed it, and made it a premise in all Scripture exposition, and in all Christian reasonings. The infinite love of the Universal Father is the key with which he unlocked the treasury of heavenly blessings, resolved the mysteries of sacred rhetoric, and made clear the harmony of the utterances of the Holy Spirit.

In these respects he was the pioneer of truth in these modern times. Since the apostolic age, and perhaps the two or three centuries immediately succeeding, to no man has Christian revelation exhibited its transparency and simplicity more fully than to our author. This is the more remarkable as he felt his own way. There were no schools of popular thought or interpretation to guide him or even aid him in his work. Those with whom he most closely affiliated in respect to the common destiny of the race, presented too much that was fanciful in conception and incongruous in interpretation, to be greatly serviceable to him in his

growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. It would be extravagant, of course, to assume that he fell into no errors of either philosophy or exegesis. This would be to assume that he was more than human. It will, however, be quite safe to aver that neither his philosophy nor exegesis ever marred the divine visage, or obstructed the trend of Scripture in regard to the triumph of good over evil. Notwithstanding his adverse theological surroundings during his entire active career, he maintained the most complete mastery of himself even in his sharpest conflicts. Beset on every hand by the defenders of traditional barbarisms, he not only replied with a vigor of logic and an aptness of illustration that left him master of the situation, but he carried the war into Africa, routing the enemy, taking their strongholds, and inflicting an ignominious defeat. As usual with the discomfited, indignation was spontaneous and abounding. But whatever may have been thought at that time, the dispassionate critic of to-day will see no unwarranted severity in his writings. From dire necessity his tone was controversial; but his magnanimity and Christian courtesy were inexhaustible. Assailed on all sides, it cannot be thought strange if he did not always carefully measure the rod with which he chastised his assailants. Feeling, however, that he held the citadel, he could well afford to be patient, persevering, and calm.

Driven to extremity, the defenders of the then current forms of faith resorted, as is usual in like cases, to calumny, detraction, and various alleged inferences from his writings, supposed to be damaging

to their soundness, with a view to prejudice the public against both himself and his teachings. The calumny and detraction were never made to stick. But in the use of alleged prejudicial inferences his assailants may be said to have been somewhat more successful. The strange fact about these supposed teachings is that not the members of other Christian bodies alone but many of the younger, and even some of the older members of our own body, apparently as ignorant of what he really did teach as they are of the Scripture authority on which he rested his teachings, continue even to this day, in these respects, to disparage his memory. While this may be justly attributed to a mere sectarian spirit, on the one hand, it is to be feared that an explanation no less dishonorable must be admitted on the other hand. There are some indications of an overweening anxiety to come into harmony with the modified thought of the past, even at the cost of sound biblical teaching and "clear thought." It turns the heads of some men to be told that they are "advanced thinkers." And when such cheap flattery is easily secured by vague disparagement of the fathers, the temptation is too great for a class of theologians who, whatever may be their age, are still in the gristle.

One of the most vital and perhaps most calumnious of these misrepresentations referred to his views of sin. The teaching of his day made every man to have sinned in Adam, and to have come into the world weighted with evil and pre-doomed to woe. So far, too, from the sinner's career in sin being limited to

this life, it was currently believed that if he left the world unrepentant an eternity of both sin and suffering awaited him beyond the grave. Against these views our author distinctly raised his voice. He rejected the assumption of pre-natal sin on the one hand, and of post-mortem sin on the other hand, maintaining that "sin begins and ends in the flesh." Seizing upon this chance form of expression, and wresting it entirely from its proper logical connections, sectarian zeal alleged that our author denied the proper moral relations of transgression, and claimed it as a mere incident of the flesh — an accident of the body — consequently having no existence apart from the body. Thus his teaching that the period of human sinfulness was the period during which man dwelt in the flesh, was perverted into a denial of the reality of sin itself.

This perversion gained additional plausibility from the emphasis he laid on Rom. vi. 7, "For he that is dead is *freed* from sin;" or as the revisers put it, "is *justified* from sin;" or, again, as the American revisers have it, "is *released* from sin." The common thought could easily discover that if sin were an incident of the flesh, the dissolution of the body would be a deliverance from sin. It was an easy step now in this process of detraction to assert that our author looked upon death, rather than Christ, as the Saviour of the world. Might they not then safely charge that he held to a scheme of "death and glory?" Must he not believe in "instantaneous salvation" at death? Is it not clear, therefore, that he believed that sinners went imme-

diately to heaven in their sins? And what teaching, pray, could be more immoral than this?

Such detractors did not, of course, perceive the contradictory character of the inferences into which, not the positions of our author, whether they be true or false, but their own intemperate zeal had driven them. If death frees men *from* sin, it does not save them *in* sin. He that is dead may be freed from sin, and yet some other cause than death may free them. That cause may be entirely independent of death. Though following it chronologically, its character and action may be exclusively moral. Passing behind the veil, what before was doubtful may become clear; what before was dark may become light; what before was distant and unseen may become near and manifest. Paul clearly enough teaches us that "death is the last enemy," and that "that shall be destroyed" (1 Cor. xv. 26). His contrasts of death with the resurrection leave no place for sin in the resurrection state. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power" (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43). With Paul, to live was Christ; to die was gain. To depart was to be with Christ (Phil. i. 21 and 23). He was confident that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. . . . For we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened: not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. v. 1 and 4). Very distinctly does he

state the difference between this world of shadows and the coming world of light. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 9-10). Our author believed these teachings of Paul. Hence, not death, but truth; not the dark hypotheses of human wisdom, but the glorious light of the divine presence, comes with saving power to men. John voiced this truth clearly in saying: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*" (1 John iii. 2). And so our author sings:—

> "As night before the rays
> Of morning flees away,
> Sin shall retire before the blaze
> Of God's eternal day."
>
> — *Church Harmonies*, Hymn 386.

It is plain that there is nothing in these views of our author, whether as regards the nature of sin, the necessity of salvation, or the divine influences by which it is effected, that distinguishes them from the known principles of the divine government in this present time. The Gospel is now the power of God unto present salvation to every one that believeth. It cannot be thought strange that the same light, love and truth that make the soul of that Gospel as it shines upon us here in the face of Jesus Christ, should reveal an

indefinitely greater power when hereafter they shall shine upon men from the unveiled face of the loving Father himself.

In the light of these convictions of our author, his detractors have not a single inch of ground to stand upon. The phrases, "death and glory," "instantaneous salvation," and the like, are not his phrases, but theirs. No unchristian meaning can be thrust into them that can at the same time be made to attach to his teachings. The imputations they were employed to cast upon his doctrines, derived all their significance from the utterly erroneous assumption that those doctrines involved the salvation of men, not *from*, but *in*, sin. Such imputations, however they may be excused as emanating from the ignorance of his enemies, admit of no excuse when made by his professed friends.

The long-taught doctrine of the atonement, which this work especially controverts, was that Christ, the second person in the "blessed trinity," endured the "infinite penalty" due to man for the "infinite sin" committed by him in Adam, thus appeasing the "infinite wrath" provoked thereby in the breast of the first person in that same "blessed trinity" — in all of which man must believe, in this world, in order to be saved in the world to come.

No matter that the infinite mercy of the second person in this "blessed trinity" is here arrayed against the "infinite wrath" of the first person; no matter that this doctrine of a God provoked to-day and appeased to-morrow sets at naught the Scripture

teaching that God is "without variableness or the shadow of turning"; no matter that it involves the Pagan blasphemy that "infinite wrath" may be in a state of infinite blessedness — Christian divines saw in all this the very "balm of Gilead," the "bread of God that cometh down from heaven and nourisheth unto everlasting life."

It was inconceivable to them that one teaching the heresies of this work could possibly be saved. That God so *loved* the world that He sent His Son to be its Saviour; that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; that Christ, having "tasted death for every man," "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied"— the preaching of doctrines like these was "daubing with untempered mortar." Such preachers were deemed enemies of God and destroyers of men. Nevertheless, their word has prevailed. The old doctrine is heard no more. A better mind has taken possession of the church. And though here and there a general is trying to collect his scattered forces into some midway camp, their guns are spiked and their flags are at half-mast. The Andover wail is the requiem of "Old Orthodoxy," and who that regards the logic of events will venture to say that it is not equally a prelude to the requiem of the "New?"

In regard to the doctrine of future retribution, it is gratifying to note the change of tone on all hands. Future and even endless retribution was presumed to wait upon the sins of this life. Now future punishment is predicated upon future sinning. Formerly much

stress was laid upon the "pleasures of sin," as the church phrased it, and upon the righteous being compelled to "bear the heat and burden of the day." This inequality was supposed to demand future adjustment. At the present time, few have the hardihood to deny the efficiency of the divine law, the moral law included, in the present world, or to declare that the retributions they inflict are inadequate to the ends of moral justice. Formerly, future punishment was predicated mainly upon supposed Scripture authority; now mainly upon the supposed authority of philosophy. It is now admitted that "the way of the transgressor is hard" in this world. It is practically conceded that *justice* may demand no further penalty in the world to come. If further penalty shall there be endured it will be for sins there committed. But that men will continue to be sinners in the next life, philosophy is supposed to demonstrate.

The reasoning runs on this wise. Sin, oft repeated, grows into habit. Habit gives a certain fixedness to character. An evil energy thus comes to possess the sinner. By the momentum of character thus gained, the future is dominated. God does not banish the sinner; but the sinner banishes himself. It is not that he could not obey if he would; but such is the force of evil within him that he cannot will to obey. Every day of sin strengthens the habit, gives greater fixedness to character, and increases the energy that impels him on to evil. Such, it is said, is the nature of man. Such is the modifying power of evil upon him. Hence arises the inevitable continuance of sin and woe.

This, in very brief, may be said to be the logic of modern Calvinism. On such a foundation, far more than upon the Scriptures, rests the temple of modern orthodoxy. Not a few accept the premises and follow the logic *into* the next world, but suppose that it may there be arrested, and after a time the onflowing of the stream may cease. The former maintain, after a fashion, the doctrine of ceaseless sin and woe. The latter hope that sin may some time cease, and its woes consequently some time come to an end.

Were these premises correct, and this sort of reasoning entirely valid, the former conclusion, rather than the latter, would necessarily follow. All the considerations which are supposed to make it certain that sin and its consequent woes will continue for even a short time in the coming world, would, if valid, make it equally certain that they will continue for a long time. It is the force of habit, fixedness of character, momentum of evil, that is relied upon to make sure the continuance of sin for a short time. But the added sin for that short time intensifies still more the force of habit, increases still more the permanence of character, and imparts still more vigor to the energies of evil. If these were already such as to insure the continuance of sin for a month, or a year, or an age, the added power imparted during these periods respectively would insure its continuance for other months, other years, other ages; and these again for increasing months, increasing years, increasing ages. This, it will be seen, is the logic not of simple continuance, but rather of perpetual continuance. What-

ever value such logic possesses inures to the service, not of a theology of hopefulness, but of a theology of despair. Not a few who accept the premises will nevertheless shrink from the conclusion.

But are the premises sound? It cannot be denied that there is grave difficulty lying on the very face of the problem. It is immaterial whether we say men cannot obey, or say they cannot will to obey. Since both obedience and disobedience have their pivot in the will, inability to will is inability to obey. But inability to obey cannot be joined in the same person and at the same time with ability to disobey, that is, with ability to sin. He that cannot obey, cannot sin. Such a person is no longer moral. He has ceased to be an accountable being. Whatever other woes he may endure, he cannot suffer the condemnation of a free and responsible actor. Such philosophy, therefore, overthrows itself by proving too much.

These premises virtually assume also that the circumstances by which the sinner will be surrounded after death, are practically no more favorable to obedience than are those surrounding him in this world. But few persons will have the hardihood distinctly to affirm this. When death is reached, the futility of all schemes of evil must have become apparent. With the dissolution of the body, all temptations having their root in the body, or in sources immediately connected with the body, must cease. Its appetites, its passions, its lusts, of necessity die. All greed of gain for possession, for luxury, for display, for ostentation, for vicious indulgence, or for

the circumvention of others, will be at an end. On the other hand, the veil will have been rent away. The sinner will no longer look upon the transient and often deceptive appearances of things, but will behold them in their abiding essence. He may look into the face of the Father, and hear the compassionate voice of the Son bidding him "go and sin no more." That Father's hand may be tenderly laid upon the head of his wayward child as no hand had ever before been laid upon it; and the sight of the holiest, the most paternal, and the most loving of beings may touch that child's heart as it had never before been touched.

Will it be said that obedience secured only by the removal of temptation is no virtue? My answer is, we frequently and wisely remove the transgressor in this world from the midst of those circumstances which continually solicit him to evil, that we may give potency to the influences which would draw him unto good. Deliverance from temptation is not itself reformation; but it often makes reformation comparatively easy. In like manner death removes the great body of our temptations. That done, the glowing light of eternity may open up the way to God, and make obedience easy.

My final remark is, the premises themselves are not sound. Such elements of truth as are really involved are strained and overworked. Habit, at the worst, is an obstruction, not a domination. It may present barriers to achievement, but not insuperable ones. It creates facility in the accomplishment of what we will to do, but imposes no necessity upon the will itself.

The accomplished pianist has established such habitual correlation of thought and function that facile execution is extremely easy, but by no means necessary. When the cry of her first babe falls upon the mother's ear the sound of the instrument is hushed. The profane man, through long established habit, couples a thoughtless oath with almost every word; but bring him into the presence of the reverent and devout, and instantly all profanity is hushed. We might pursue these illustrations into all the more subtile realms of human activities, and the results would be found the same.

It has been supposed that our author was unacquainted with the theological subtleties of modern thought. He was undoubtedly too wise to be carried away by them, but he was far from being unfamiliar with them. Accustomed during the last four years of his life to frequent seasons of protracted communion with him, I was often surprised by his keen analysis of a philosophy which with many a shallow thinker dominated the Scriptures, and made the "word of God of none effect." How completely he bowed in reverence before the teachings of the Master, those who study his writings with open mind cannot fail to learn.

In this edition, the work is for the first time divided into parts, subdivided into chapters, and supplied with a table of contents.

Boston, July 1, 1882.

A LETTER TO THE READER.

Christian Reader, — I know it is frequently the case when a person takes a new work in hand, he first casts his eye over the title-page, and if he find no word on it that indicates perverse sentiments, and the name or denomination of the author be agreeable, he may think of having patience to read it; but being something in a hurry, passes slightly over the preface, supposing it to be of little consequence. But what sensations may have struck your mind, on reading the title of this book, and finding it to be the intention of the author to prove the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness, through the mediation and power of atoning grace, I cannot say; however, I would invite you to read, with candor and attention, not only this letter, but the whole of the work, and make up your judgment afterwards.

Many circumstances might be mentioned which, in their association, have induced me to write and publish the following treatise; but I can say, with propriety, that the central object was that in which I always find the most happiness; viz., to do what I find most necessary in order to render myself most useful to mankind.

I have, from my early youth, been much in the habit of inquiring into the things of religion and religious sentiments; and have, for a number of years, seen, or thought I saw, great inconsistencies in what has, for a long time, passed for orthodoxy in divinity.

The ideas that sin is infinite, and that it deserves an infinite punishment; that the law transgressed is infinite, and inflicts an infinite penalty; and that the great Jehovah took on himself a natural body of flesh and blood, and actually suffered death on a cross to satisfy his infinite justice, and thereby save his creatures from endless misery, are ideas which appear to me to be unfounded in the nature of reason, and unsupported by divine revelation. Such notions have, in my opinion, served to darken the human understanding and obscure the gospel of eternal life; and have rendered, what I esteem as divine revelation, a subject of discredit to thousands, who, I believe, would never have condemned the Scriptures had it not been for those gross absurdities being contended for, and the Scriptures forced to bend to such significations. Christian authors and preachers have labored much to dissuade those whom they have caused to disbelieve the Christian religion from their infidelity. But, in this case, the salt has lost its savor, become good for nothing, and is trodden under foot of men, who are too sensible to believe the unreasonable dogmas imposed on the world, either through error or design, and sanctioned by tradition; and too inattentive to search the Scriptures faith-

fully and impartially whereby they might have learned that those errors were neither in them nor supported by them. One particular object, therefore, in this work is, if possible, to free the Scripture doctrine of atonement from those incumbrances which have done it so much injury; and open a door, at least, for the subject to be investigated on reasonable grounds, and by fair argument.

If we admit that our Creator made us reasonable beings, we ought, of course, to believe that all the truth which is necessary for our belief is not only reasonable, but reducible to our understandings.

In order to come at the subject of atonement so as to have light continually shining along the path which I intend to occupy, I found it necessary to show my reasons for not admitting the doctrine on the ground on which it is usually argued; to do which, I found I must of necessity show that the common notion of the infinity of sin is unfounded in truth; and, of course, every consequence deducible from such an error, equally unfounded and unsupported. It may seem not a little strange to some of my readers that I dispute the infinity of the law against which sin is committed; as all unholiness must be either in union or disunion with the eternal law of holiness and Divine purity. But if the reader will take a little pains to observe particularly, it will appear plain that no being can stand amenable to a law above his capacity. And as the creature is finite in his earthly character, in which character only he is, or can be a sinner, it is not reasonable to say that he stands amenable to an

infinite law. But, as the reader will find in this work, so much of the Divine law of perfection as the creature obtains a knowledge of (which, in comparison to the whole, is no more than a shadow to a substance), is the law which he violates by his sin. And though we may speak of the sin of ignorance, it can amount to no more than the production of a virtuous intention thwarted by ignorance, or the same principle by which the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, gratify their various inclinations and appetites. And I do not think my reader will wish to have me prove that such sin is not infinite.

In my argument on the cause or origin of sin, I thought it necessary to hint a little on the general idea of the subject, endeavoring to show the want of propriety in what is commonly contended for; and I have sought for the rise of unholy temptations in the constitutions of earthly and finite beings. I have endeavored, also, to trace the causes and consequences of sin (as sin) so as to determine the finite nature of all which belongs to sin as cause and consequence. In any sense in which it can be said that God is the author of anything whatever, in that sense of speaking it cannot be sin. And in any sense in which any action or event can be said to be endless in its consequences, God must be considered the author of it.

In all the statements which I have made of the doctrinal ideas of others, I have been careful to state no more than what I have read in authors, or heard contended for in preaching, or conversation; and if I

have, in any instance, done those ideas any injustice, it was not intended. The reason why I have not quoted any author, or spoken of any denomination is, I have not felt it to be my duty nor inclination to write against any name or denomination in the world; but my object has been, what I pray it ever may be, to contend against error wherever I find it; and to receive truth, and support it, let it come from what quarter it may. For the sake of ease, however, in writing, I reasoned with my opponent, opposer, or objector, meaning no one in particular, but any one who uses the arguments, and states the objections which I have endeavored to answer. It is very probable that some may think me too ironical, and, in many instances, too severe, on what I call error. But I find it very difficult to expose error so as to be understood by all, without carrying, in many instances, my arguments in such a form as may not be agreeable to those who believe in what I wish to correct. I confess I should have been glad to have written, on all my inquiries, so as not to have displeased any, but to have pleased all, could I have done it and accomplished my main design; but this, I was persuaded, would be difficult. I have, therefore, paid particular attention to nothing but my main object, depending on the goodness of my reader to pardon what may be disagreeable in manner or form as inadvertencies.

What I have written on the subject of the Trinity is mainly to show the reader in what light I view the Mediator that my general ideas of atonement may be

the easier understood. And though I think my objections and arguments against the common idea of three distinct persons in the Godhead, who are equal in power and glory, to be unanswerable, yet it was not my intention to attend to a full refutation of those ideas, as I think that has frequently been done, and well done.

The opposers of Universalism have generally written and contended against the doctrine under an entirely mistaken notion of it. They have endeavored to show the absurdity of believing that men could be received into the kingdom of glory and righteousness in their sins, which no Universalist ever believed. In this work I have endeavored to make as fair a statement of what I call Universalism as I was able; and it stands on such ground that the propriety of it can no more be disputed than the propriety of universal holiness and reconciliation to God. Perhaps the reader will say he has read a number of authors on the doctrine of Universalism, and finds considerable difference in their systems. That I acknowledge is true; but all agree in the main point, viz., that universal holiness and happiness is the great object of the Gospel plan. And as for the different ways in which individuals may believe this work will be done, it proves nothing against the main point; but proves, what I wish could be proved concerning all other Christian denominations, that they have set up no standard of their own to cause all to bow to, or be rejected as heretics. We feel our own imperfections; we wish for every one to seek, with all his might, after wisdom; and let it be

found where it may, or by whom it may, we humbly wish to have it brought to light that all may enjoy it; but do not feel authorized to condemn an honest inquirer after truth for what he believes different from a majority of us.

A few sentences, which the reader will find towards the close of this work, which have reference to a punishment after death, may cause him to desire more of my ideas on the subject.

The doctrine of punishment after death has, by many able writers, been contended for; some of whom have argued such punishments to be endless, and others limited. But it appears to me that they have taken wrong ground who have endeavored to support the latter, as well as those who have labored to prove the former. They have both put great dependence on certain figurative and parabolical expressions, or passages of Scripture, which they explain so as to cause them to allude to such an event. It appears to me that they have not sufficiently attended to the nature of sin so as to learn its punishment to be produced from a law of necessity and not a law of penalty. Had they seen this, they would also have seen that a perpetuity of punishment must be connected with an equal continuance of sin on the same principle that an effect is dependent on its cause. Who in the world would contend that a man who had sinned one year could expiate his guilt by sinning five more with greater turpitude of heart? State the punishment; say a thousand years for a sinner who dies in unbelief. What is it for? Say for his incorrigibleness in this

world. Well, does he commit sin during these thousand years? Surely, or he could not be miserable. Then I ask if it take a thousand years' punishment in another world to reward the sinner for, say fifty years of sin in this, how long must he be punished afterwards for the sin he commits during the thousand years? The punishment or sufferings which we endure in consequence of sin is not a dispensation of any penal law, but of the law of necessity, in which law, as long as a cause continues, it produces its effects. Therefore, to prove a man will suffer condemnation for sin, at thirty, forty, or fifty years of age, it would be necessary to prove that he would be a sinner at that time, or those times. So, in order to prove that a man will be miserable after this mortal life is ended, it must first be proved that he will sin in the next state of existence.

It has been argued by many that the doctrine of future punishment, or misery, is a necessary doctrine to dissuade men from committing sin, which surely surprises me. To tell a person who is in love of sin that if he does not immediately refrain he will have to continue in sin for a long time would be true, be-sure; but would be void of force to dissuade him from what he is in love with. I believe that as long as men sin they will be miserable, be that time longer or shorter; and that as soon as they cease from sin, they begin to experience Divine enjoyment.

The Scripture speaks of the times of the restitution of all things, but does not inform us of their number, or their duration. It also speaks of the ful-

ness of times, but gives us no date, or the duration of them.

I have not stated so many objections against the doctrine which I have labored to prove, as many of my readers may wish I had, nor so many as I should have been glad to, was it not for swelling the work to more of an expensive size. But I have stated, and endeavored to answer the most frequent objections, and those on which my opposers put the most dependence; and I should have taken great satisfaction in communicating many more arguments, both from reason and Scripture, in favor of universal holiness and happiness, than I have was it not for the reason assigned in the other case. However, if those objections which I have taken notice of are answered to the reader's satisfaction, other Scriptures generally used as arguments against the salvation of all men, will not be hard to be understood as not unfavorable to the doctrine. And as for the proofs which I have deduced from Scripture and reason, I believe them entirely conclusive; but if not, more of the same kind would not be.

The reason I have not particularly explained those parables of the New Testament which I have had occasion to notice in this work is, my Notes, of which mention is made on the title-page of this book, are before the public, and contain my ideas on most of the parables spoken by Christ.

A question may be asked by many, which has labored much in my mind, respecting the propriety of publishing books on Divinity, when we profess to

believe in the book called the Bible, that it contains all which we mean to communicate as truth in matters of religion; on which question I am determined for myself that the Gospel of Jesus Christ would have been better understood had the Bible been the only book ever read on the subject. And though I doubt not but many authors have done great justice to those subjects on which they have written, and the light of the Scriptures have, by such means, been caused to shine; yet, by others, it has been greatly obscured. And had one-half the attention been paid to the Bible which has been paid to those authors who have written upon it, it would, in my opinion, have been incomparably better for Christendom. But, on account of errors imbibed in consequence of erroneous annotations, it may be argued that it is now necessary to write and publish correct sentiments by the same parity of reasoning as we argue the necessity of those means to restore health, which are not necessary to continue it.

To the short exhortation with which the believer in Universalism will meet in this work, he is humbly invited to pay strict attention, as no faith, however true it may be, can be of any real service to the believer, unless it be accompanied with the spirit and life of that truth in which it is grounded. The greater the beauty of a person, the more lamentable his death. The more divinity there is in any faith, the greater is the pity it should not be alive. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

My brethren in the ministry will not think it assuming that I have spoken of the necessity of our paying strict attention to the stewardship into which God by his grace hath put us; as it was not written so much to instruct as to show the brethren my faith; that they may see the ground on which I stand; know the manner in which I contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; and feel for me the same fellowship which I feel for them. You may regret that my ideas were not more correct in many instances, and think the great subject on which I have written might have obtained better justice from some more experienced writer; in which you have the same ideas with myself. But in this you may be satisfied that I have written, as I now think and believe, without leaning to the right or to the left, to please or displease. I have been often solicited to write and publish my general ideas on the Gospel, but have commonly observed to my friends that it might be attended with disagreeable consequences, as it is impossible to determine whether the ideas which we entertain at the present time are agreeable to those which we shall be under the necessity of adopting after we have had more experience; and knowing, to my satisfaction, that authors are very liable to feel such an attachment to sentiments which they have openly avowed to the world, that their prejudice frequently obstructs their further acquisitions in the knowledge of the truth; and even in cases of conviction, their own self-importance will keep them from acknowledging their mistakes. And having some

knowledge of my own infirmities, I felt the necessity of precaution, which I have no reason to believe is, or has been, injurious.

I have had, for some time, an intention to write a treatise on this subject, but thought of deferring it until more experience might enable me to perform it better, and leisure give me opportunity to be more particular. But the consideration of the uncertainty of life was one great stimulus to my undertaking it at this time, added to a possibility of living to be informed with what success it meets in the world, and of having an opportunity to correct whatever I might, in my future studies, find incorrect, were not the smallest causes of my undertaking it.

It has often been said by the enemies of the doctrine for which I have contended, that it would do to live by but not to die by; meaning that it would not give the mind satisfaction when sensible it was about to leave a mortal for an immortal state. As to the truth of the assertion, I cannot positively say; that moment has not yet been experienced by me; and as those who make the remark have never believed the doctrine, I cannot see how they should know any better than I do. Thus much I can say, I believe I have seen and often heard of persons rejoicing in the doctrine in the last hours of their lives; but I do not build my faith on such grounds. The sorrows, or the joys of persons in their last moments, prove nothing to me of the truth of their general belief. A Jew, who despises the name of Christ, from the force of his education, may be filled with comfortable hopes in his

last moments from the force of the same education. I have no doubt but a person may believe, or pretend to believe in the doctrine of universal salvation, when he knows of no solid reason for his belief, but has rather rested the matter on the judgment of those in whom he has placed more confidence than he has in reality on the Saviour of the world; and I think it very possible that such Universalists may have strange and unexpected fears, when the near approach of death, or any other circumstance, should cause them to think more seriously on so weighty a subject.

There must be a time, with all men, whose faith and confidence are placed in any thing short of divine mercy, that will be extremely trying; and all the education in the world cannot prevent it.

What my feelings might be, concerning the doctrine which I believe, were I called to contemplate it on a death-bed, I am as unable to say as I am what I may think of it a year hence should I live and be in health. But I am satisfied, beyond a doubt, that if I live a year longer, and then find cause to give up my present belief, that I shall not feel a consciousness of having professed what I did not sincerely believe; and were I called to leave the world and my writings in it, and at the last hour of my life should find I had erred, yet I am satisfied that I should possess the approbation of a good conscience in all I have written.

Therefore, though sensible of my imperfections, yet enjoying great consolation in believing the doctrine for which I have argued in the following work, and in the enjoyment of a good conscience, I submit the fol-

lowing pages to a generous and candid public, praying for the blessing of the God whom I serve on the feeble endeavors of the most unworthy whom he hath called as a servant of all men.

THE AUTHOR.

A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

TO THE

Publishers of the Third Edition.

BOSTON, January 2, 1827.

DEAR SIR, — In reply to yours of the 23d ult., I will say that I am glad that another edition of the Treatise on Atonement is to be given to the public, though I regret that I could not have an opportunity to give the work a general revision.

I do not wish, by any means, to retract any of the general or leading sentiments which are maintained in that work, although more than twenty years have elapsed since I wrote it and first sent it abroad in the world. But there are some minor ideas and some particular applications of certain passages of Scripture which, undoubtedly, would receive some modifications were I to revise the whole.

Though I remain entirely satisfied that according to the theme of divine revelation, the whole race of man is destined to a state of immortality, which state will partake of perfect holiness and happiness, I am not certain that I have not, in my Treatise, indicated something in relation to man's first creation, previous to his formation, which is not clearly supported by Scripture.

And yet I am not able fully to account for the following reading unless something like what I have suggested be true. (See Gen. ii. 4, 5, 6, 7.) "These are the generations of the heavens, and of the earth, when they were created; in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." It seems that every plant and every herb, as well as man, were created before they grew, or appeared in form as now beheld.

What I have alluded to in the Treatise is found on the 35th page.

On page 123, I say, "It is plain to me, from Scripture, that the Mediator is the first human soul which was created, etc." These passages which I understood to favor this opinion, I now believe have reference to the new creation or new order of things brought about by the Gospel dispensation. It is, however, to be understood that I now as fully believe in the entire dependence of Christ on God as when I wrote the Treatise.

When I wrote this work on Atonement I was strongly inclined to believe that the Scriptures did not teach that either sin or its punishment would exist

in man's future state, but my conviction of that fact was then by no means so strong as it now is. I mention this as a reason why the reader finds, in several passages of this book, expressions which seem to allow that sin and its corresponding miseries may exist out of a state of flesh and blood.

I wish furthermore to observe, that I am now apprehensive, that in the use of some passages which speak of fire, I may have applied them to the refining and purifying of men, in cases wherein their proper use applied to the destruction of the Jews, and to the sufferings which the Saviour foretold would come on that people.

A TREATISE ON ATONEMENT.

Part I.—Of Sin.

CHAPTER I.

ITS NATURE.

In this Treatise on Atonement, I shall confine myself to three general inquiries: I. Of Sin; II. Of Atonement for Sin; III. Of the Consequences of Atonement to Mankind. These particulars may be represented by a disorder; the remedy for the disorder, and the health enjoyed in consequence of a cure.

I. Of sin, which for the sake of ease, I subdivided as follows: 1. Its nature; 2. Its cause; 3. Its effects.

1. Of the nature of sin. Sin is the violation of a law which exists in the mind, which law is the imperfect knowledge men have of moral good. This law is transgressed, whenever, by the influence of temptation, a good understanding yields to a contrary choice. Where a law exists, it presupposes a legislature whose intention in legislation must be thwarted, in order for the law to take cognizance of sin. This legislature, in all moral accountable beings, is a capacity to understand, connected with the causes and means of knowledge, which standing or existing on finite or limited principles, will justify my supposition, that sin, in its

nature, ought to be considered finite and limited, rather than infinite and unlimited, as has, by many, been supposed.

By offering my reasons against the infinity of sin, I shall open to an easy method of showing it to be finite. The supposition that sin is infinite, is supported, or rather pretended to be supported, on the consideration of its being committed against an infinite law, which is produced by an infinite legislature, who is God himself. I have before observed, and I think justly, that the intention of a legislature, in legislation, must be thwarted, in order for the law to take cognizance of sin. Now if God, in a direct sense of speaking, be the legislator of the law which is thwarted by transgression, in the same direct sense of speaking, his intentions in legislation are thwarted. With eyes open, the reader cannot but see, that if sin be infinite because it is committed against an infinite law, whose author is God, the design of Deity must be abortive; to suppose which, brings a cloud of darkness over the mind, as intense as the supposition is erroneous. It cannot with any propriety be supposed, that any rational being can have an intention contrary to the knowledge which he possesses. Were a resolve brought into the State Legislature to be passed into an act, it would be very unlikely to succeed, providing the legislature knew that the intention of the act would utterly fail. It is possible, and very frequently the case, that imperfect beings desire contrary to their knowledge; but this, in every instance is proof and often the cause of their misery. In such cases, mis-

ery rises to the exact proportion to the strength of desire. Now to reason justly, we must conclude, that if God possess infinite wisdom, he could never intend anything to take place, or be, that will not take place, or be; nor that which is, or will be, not to be, at the time when it is. And it must be considered erroneous to suppose that the Allwise ever desired anything to take place, which by his wisdom, he knew would not; as such a supposition must in effect, suppose a degree of misery in the eternal mind equal to the strength of his fruitless desire! Were this the case, all the misery to which mortals are subject, bears not the thousandth part of the proportion to the miseries of the Divine Being, as the smallest imaginable atom does to the weight of the ponderous globe; providing, at the same time, the idea of infinity is attached to Deity! Again, if we admit of a disappointment to the Supreme Being, even in the smallest matter of consideration, it follows, that we have no satisfactory evidence whereby to prove that anything, at present, in the whole universe, is as the Supreme intended. All the harmonies of nature, which to the eye of wondering man, are so convincing of the existence of that power, wisdom and goodness which he adores, may have continued their laws in active force much longer than God intended; brought into existence millions of beings more than were contemplated in creation; and by this time become a perfect nuisance to the general plan of the Almighty. The admission of the error refuted, would sink the mind to the nether parts of moral depravity, where darkness reigns with all its horrors.

The above arguments are introduced to show the absurdity of admitting a violation of the intention of the Supreme Legislator.

I now turn on the other side, and admit as a fact, what I have sufficiently refuted, viz., that the intentions of God as a Supreme Legislator are violated by the sin of finite beings; but must beg leave to inform the reader that the proposition will, by no means, afford the intended consequences; but yields me an argument in favor of the finite nature of sin, which I do not want, and of which I shall make no other use than to explode the proposition itself. If any intention of Deity were ever thwarted, it proves, without evasion, that he is not infinite; if so, his will, or intention, cannot be infinite; and, therefore, the consequences intended by the proposition are forever lost, as they exist only upon the supposition of his being infinite. If it be argued, that the intentions of Deity, as a legislator, are violated, not strictly in an infinite sense, but in some subordinate degree, it is giving up the ground contended for, to all intents; for, if the intention violated be not infinite, the sin of violating it, cannot be infinite.

Again, if sin be infinite and unlimited, it cannot be superseded by any principle or being in the universe; for goodness cannot be more than infinite, neither is there a degree for Deity to occupy above it. And it may be further argued, that the admission of the error refuted, would be a denial of any Supreme Being in the universe; for, as Deity does not supersede sin, he cannot be superior to that which is equal to himself.

Again, I further inquire, can that be considered as an infinite evil, which is limited in its consequences? The answer must be in the negative. If sin be an infinite evil, and infinite in its consequences as an evil, not only all created beings must suffer endlessly by it, God himself can never cease to experience the torment-giving power of that which he is unable to avoid; I say more, if sin be infinite and unlimited, for it must be unlimited, if it be infinite, it follows that there is no such principle in the universe, as any one property which we are wont to attribute to the Almighty; for, if once we admit a principle of divine justice to have an existence, it is granted that sin is bounded by it, and therefore cannot be infinite; and it is a fact that sin can nowhere exist, only where it can be compared with justice. Again, it ought not to be supposed that the intentions of Deity were ever violated, if we admit, at the same time, that he had power to avoid such violation. And who, in their senses, will say, that that which is unavoidable by God, is unavoidable by man?

Enough, undoubtedly, is said, to show the egregious mistake of supposing sin to be infinite; and more need not be written on the subject were it not by some contended, that Job xxii. 5, is in full proof of the infinity of sin. "Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?" In answer to this passage, I need only turn the reader to chap. xlii. 7, "And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said unto Eliphaz the Timnite, my wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for

ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Jacob hath." Observe, kind reader, the words which are brought to prove the infinity of sin, are neither the words of God, nor of one whom he approved; but they are the words of that Timnite, against whom God's anger was kindled, for not speaking the thing that was right.

Once more, and I close this part of my query: If sin be infinite in its nature, there can be no one sin greater than another. The smallest offence against the good of society is equal to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. If what we call a small crime be not infinite, the greatest cannot be, providing there is any proportion between the great and the small. Are not the words of Christ (Matt. xii. 31), where he speaks of sins and blasphemies that should be forgiven unto men, and of blasphemies that should not be forgiven men, a sufficient evidence that some sins are more heinous than others? Again (1 Epistle of John v. 16), where some sins are said to be not unto death, and some unto death, etc.

Now, admitting the matter proved, that sin is not infinite, it follows, of course, that it is proved to be finite. However, we will now attend to the direct evidences of the finite nature of sin.

The law which takes cognizance of sin is not infinite, it being produced by the legislature which I have before noticed, viz., a capacity to understand, connected with the causes and means of knowledge. In order for a law to be infinite, the legislature must be so; but man's ability to understand is finite, and all

the means which are in his power for the acquisition of knowledge are finite; all his knowledge is circumscribed, and the law produced by such causes must be like them, not infinite but finite. An infinite law would be far above the capacity of a finite being, and it would be unreasonable to suppose man amenable to a law above his capacity. All our knowledge of good and evil is obtained by comparison. We call an action evil by comparing it with one which we call good. Were it in our power to embrace all the consequences that are connected with our actions in our intentions, our meanings would seldom be what they now are. Had it been so with the brethren of Joseph, when they sold him to the Ishmaelites, that they then knew all the consequences which would attend the event, they would not have meant it, as they did, for evil, but seeing with perfectly unbeclouded eyes their own salvation, and that of the whole family of promise, they would have meant it for good, as did the Almighty who superintended the affair. Now the act of selling Joseph was sin, in the meaning of those who sold him; but it was finite, considered as sin, for it was bounded by the narrowness of their understandings, limited by their ignorance, and circumscribed by the wisdom and goodness of him who meant it for good. If this sin had been infinite, nothing we can justly call good, could have been the consequence; but who ever read the event without seeing that the best of consequences were connected with it?

The promised seed, in whom all the families of the

earth are to be blessed, according to the word of promise to Abraham, was to descend from that family which was preserved through seven years of famine, as a consequence of the good intended in that event. And who but God can comprehend the infinite good contained in all the glorious plan of mediatorial grace? We then see, that what in a limited sense, we may justly call sin, or evil, in an unlimited sense is justly called good. We say, of the top of yonder mountain, it is exceedingly high; and of yonder valley, it is low; and this we justly say, by comparing one with the other, in respect to the centre of our earth. But the moment we extend our thoughts to contemplate the millions of worlds in unbounded space, and take the whole in one grand system, the idea of high and low is lost. So is sin finished, when, by divine grace, our understandings are enlightened, and we hear our spiritual Joseph say, "Grieve not yourselves; ye meant it unto evil, but God meant it unto good." It will be granted, on all sides, that no action unconnected with design ought to be considered sin; it is then an evil intention that constitutes an evil action. For instance, a man exerting himself to the utmost of his abilities to save the life of his neighbor, accidentally takes his life, the consequence is not the guilt of murder, but heart-aching grief for the loss of his friend. Again, a man exerting himself with all his ingenuity and strength to take the life of his neighbor, misses his intention and saves his life from immediate danger; the consequence is not the approbation of a good conscience for having saved the life of his

neighbor, but condemnation for having designed his death, and perhaps mortification in his disappointment. By these instances, the reader may see, that no act can be determined to be morally good, or evil, by the consequences which follow, but only by the disposition, or intention, which the actor possesses when the act is done. Then, in order for the sin to be infinite, the intention of the transgressor must be infinite, embracing all the consequences that can ever arise from what he does; but this is never the case with finite beings. We never know all the effects or consequences that will be produced from the smallest of those acts which we do in time. It is the immediate consequences which we have in our power to calculate upon, and in them we are often deceived. Our acts as moral accountables are all limited to the narrow circle of our understanding; therefore our goodness is limited, being of the finite nature of our knowledge, and our sin is in the same finite and limited circle. It may be argued very justly, that as no finite cause can produce an infinite effect, no finite creature can commit an infinite sin; and as every effect must stand in relation to its cause, so man being finite, cannot be the cause of an evil which does not stand in relation to man the finite cause. Should the reader suppose, that my admitting the act of selling Joseph was attended with unlimited consequences, in opposition to my sentiment wherein I limit all actions which originate in finite causes; I reply, as the act of selling Joseph respected the purpose of Deity, and the plan of grace, those who sold him do not stand as

even the shadow of a cause, but only as instruments, by which God effected his own divine and gracious purpose. Perhaps the reader, by this time, is ready to say, according to this reasoning, there can be no such things as real evil in the universe. If, by real evil, be meant something that ought not to be, in respect to all the consequences which attend it, I cannot admit of its existence; for I cannot conceive of any productive cause whatever, that can be, strictly speaking, limited in its consequences. For instance, the first transgression of man, no one can suppose, has ceased in its consequences; for, from that cause, the knowledge of good and evil exists in moral beings, and when the effects of that knowledge will cease, I cannot imagine. If it be objected, that to call that a sin which produces an infinite continuance of good effects, must be absurd; I say, in reply, the objection comes too late; for it is already proved, that the consequences of an act do not determine whether the act be good or evil.

I have, in the foregoing queries, spoken of that kind of sin which is productive of remorse; however, we read, be sure, of the sin of ignorance (see Num. xv. 27, etc.); but this I conceive to be more of a legal than of a moral nature, and it is sometimes called error; it is in a thousand instances productive of sorrow and disappointment, but never of guilt. If we consider the Jews under this law, or the Gentiles, who, the apostles says, were a law unto themselves, we shall find them exposed to guilt, on the same principles. Therefore, moral transgression must vary,

as the knowledge and understanding of men vary, in various circumstances.

If it be thought by the reader, that I have passed over the spirit of the law, which is love to God in a superlative degree, and an esteem for our neighbors equal to that which we have for ourselves; I answer, I have not altogether passed by it. This law of divine love is that infinite law of perfection, which is higher than our capacities extend, in a finite state. The law given to Israel, literally speaking, was only a shadow of the spirit of love; and all our knowledge of moral holiness is but a faint resemblance of that sublime rectitude from which the most upright of the sons of men are at a great distance.

CHAPTER II.

ITS ORIGIN.

Having hinted so much on the nature of sin as to make the subject plain to the reader's understanding, I will now pass to an inquiry into its cause, or origin.

The origin of sin has, among Christians in general, been very easily accounted for; but in a way, I must confess, that never gave me any satisfaction, since I came to think for myself on subjects of this nature. A short chimerical story of the bard, Milton, has given perfect satisfaction to millions, respecting the introduction of moral evil into the moral system which we occupy. The substance of the account is: Some time before the creation of man, the Almighty created multitudes of spiritual beings, called angels. Some of these creatures of God were much higher in dignity and authority than others, but all perfectly destitute of sin, or moral turpitude. One dignified above all the rest, stood Prime Minister of the Almighty, clothed with the highest missive power, and clad with garments of primeval light; obsequious to nothing but the high behest of his Creator, he discharged the functions of his office with promptitude and dignity, suited to the eminence of his station, and to the admiration of celestial millions. But when it pleased Jehovah to reveal the brightness of his glory and the image of the Godhead in humanity, he gave

forth the command (see Psalm xcvii. 7), "Worship him, all ye gods." And (Heb. i. 6), "And again, when he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." Lucifer, Son of the Morning (as Christians have called him), surprised at the idea of worshipping any being but God himself, looked on the Son with ineffable disdain, and in a moment grew indignant, brushed his strongest pinions, and waved his wings for the throne of God, challenged supremacy with the Almighty, and cast his eye to the sides of the north as a suitable place to establish his empire. Legions of spirits followed this chief in rebellion, and formed a dangerous party in the kingdom of the Almighty. The Son of God was invested with full power as Generalissimo of Heaven, to command the remaining forces, against the common enemy. And in short, after many grievous battles between armies of contending spirits, where life could not, in the least, be exposed, Lucifer and his party were driven out of Heaven, leaving it in peace, though in a great measure, depopulated!

God having created the earth, and placed the first man and woman in a most happy situation of innocence and moral purity, without the smallest appetite for sin, or propensity to evil, the arch Apostate enviously looked from his fiery prison, to which he was consigned by the command of the Almighty, and beholding man placed in so happy a situation, and in a capacity to increase to infinite multitudes, by which the kingdom of Heaven would be enlarged, was deter-

mined to crop this tree in the bud. He, therefore, turns into a serpent, goes to the woman and beguiles her, gets her to eat of a fruit which God had forbidden, by which means he introduced sin into our system.

I have not been particular in this sketch, but it contains the essence of the common idea. I shall now put it under examination, looking diligently for the propriety of accounting for the origin of moral evil in this way.

And first, of this memorable rebellion in heaven! It seems that this rebel angel was always obedient to the commands of his Maker, until the hour of his fall; that there was not the least spot of pollution in him, until he felt the emotions of pride, which lifted him above submission to the Son of God. This being the case, I ask, was this angel ignorant of the real character of the Son, whom he was commanded to worship? If he were not, but knew it to be no other than the true Eternal, his Creator, manifested in a nature which Jehovah created; if he loved his Maker as he ought to do, which none will pretend to dispute; he would have worshipped him with due reverence, the moment he made the discovery and command: this no person in his senses will dispute. If he did not know the real character whom he was commanded to worship, had he complied, he would have worshipped he knew not what. And nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that infinite wisdom would command his creatures to worship ignorantly. I ask, further, could purity produce impurity;

or moral holiness, unholiness? All answer, no. Was not the angel holy in every faculty? Was not the command, for him to worship the Son, holy and just? All answer, yes. Then from such causes, how was sin produced? The reader will easily see the question cannot be answered. Now, reader, be so kind as to turn to the scripture, to which I have referred you on this subject, and see if we have any authority for saying, that either gods or angels refused to worship when commanded. "Again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him." That this first begotten is Christ, no doubt will be entertained. But when was he brought into the world, before or since the first transgression of man? Since, most certainly. Then, supposing millions of angels had sinned at that time, it could have had no consequence productive of man's trangression, as a cause cannot be posterior to its effects. Therefore, to suppose that those angels who never sinned until long after man became a transgressor, were the instigators of what is called the fall, discovers a want of calculation. And further, what authority have we for believing that the command was disobeyed? We find nothing connected with either passage, viz., that in Psalms or that in Hebrews, which intimates a refusal among the gods, or angels. And I see no need of supposing, that by gods, in one text, or by angels in the other, any other beings are intended than men. In respect to the command for all the gods to worship him, I observe, "they were called gods to whom the word

of God came, and the scriptures cannot be broken." And the command, for all the angels of God to worship, stands on this proper ground; by angels, are meant messengers, who are employed by God, for the information of their fellow-men; but as all those messengers, or ministers, were inferior to the "Messenger of the covenant," whom the Lord promised to send unto Jerusalem, it was suitable to show his superiority, by giving such a token, in the scriptures, as commanding all the angels to worship him. There is another passage in Isaiah xiv. 12, etc.: "How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! for thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend unto heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north," etc.

"Here," I have been told, "we have a particular account of the sin which Satan committed in Heaven." But as there is nothing in this passage, or its connections, that has reference to any other creature or being, as Lucifer, Son of the Morning, than the King of Babylon, I shall say but little upon it. Observe, the question is asked, How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning? How art thou cut down to the ground, who didst weaken the nations? This Lucifer weakened the nations before he fell, but was unable to weaken them afterwards. He said in his heart he would ascend unto Heaven. Was this the sin of Satan, as is generally

supposed? Was he not already in Heaven? How then could he say in his heart, I will ascend unto Heaven? I will not trouble the reader with anything so vague as the vulgar application of this scripture, only enough to show that it had no such meaning. The King of Babylon is pointed out, in this prophecy, as exalting his throne above the stars of God, which, in a figurative sense, undoubtedly meant his exalting himself by the reduction of the Jews, who are figuratively called the stars of God.

Again, this angel of light must have been very ignorant of the power and goodness of the Almighty, in order to have possessed a thought, that to rebel against him could be of any possible advantage, or that he could have carried and maintained a contest with him. If he were as ignorant as all this, the inhabitants of Heaven must have been extremely uncultivated, in that age of eternity, and no great ornament to a place so much famed for glory and grandeur. If Heaven, which is said to be God's throne, be, or ever were inhabited by defectable beings, the place itself must be a defectable place; and why the Almighty should take up his special abode in a defectable place, surrounded by defectable beings, I cannot imagine. But I pass on:

After Satan was turned out of Heaven, he saw no possible way to injure his adversary, only by contaminating his creatures, which he had just made, and placed in the happy situation just described. Here observe, the matter appears strange. Did God not know the evil disposition of Satan? Had he forgotten

the awful difficulty but just settled? Or would he leave an innocent lamb to the ferocity of a bear robbed of her whelps? God had driven Satan from Heaven, from his own presence, but left him at loose ends to prey on his tender offspring, whom he had just left in a defenceless situation, on this ball of earth! What would appear more unnatural and shocking than for a father to chase his enemy out at his door, but leave him to slay his defenceless children in the street? I shall, after what I have observed, beg liberty to say, I am so far from believing any such story respecting the cause of sin, that I have not even the shadow of evidence, from scripture or reason, to support the sentiment. But I have been told, that man, standing in a state of sinless purity, could not have fallen from that rectitude, unless there had been some sinful being to have tempted him. Admitting there is any force in this observation, it stands as directly against the fall of Satan, without a sinful temptation, as it does against man's transgression, without a tempter. Was man more pure, before he sinned, than that holy angel in Heaven? If not, how could that angel sin, without a temptation, easier than man, who was made in a lower grade? But supposing we should admit that God commanded an angel to worship his Son Jesus, and the angel refused, and call that the first sin ever committed, it would not determine its origin or cause. A cause, or origin must exist, before an effect, or production. So, after all our journeying to heaven after a sinning angel, and after pursuing him to hell, and from hell to the earth,

we have not yet answered the question, viz., What is the origin of sin? We have only shown, that the way in which this question has been generally solved, is without foundation.

Having stated what I have been told was the origin of sin, and given my reasons why I do not believe it, I now come to give my own ideas of the matter.

Scripture, with the assistance of that reason, without which, the scriptures would be of no more service to us than they are to the brute creation, I shall take for my guide, on the question before me. Almighty God is a being of infinite perfections; this the scriptures will support, and reason declare. He was the author of our existence, being the creator of the first man and woman, the occasion of their being formed of the dust of the ground, and the director of that providence by which we are all introduced by ordinary generation. Our Maker must have had a design in the works of his hands; this the scriptures argue, and reason says. The whole of God's design must be carried into effect, and nothing more, admitting him to be an infinite being. We are informed that God created man in his own image; that he blessed him, and set him over the works of his hands; and reason cannot deny the truth of it. But what was this image of God in which man was created? Answer, it was Christ, who, in scripture, is called "the beginning of the creation of God;" who, St. Paul says, "is the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person." Now there is no need of saying much where the truth is easy to come at. If Christ be the

image of God, and man was created in God's image, it is plain that man was created in Christ, was blessed in Christ, and in Christ set over the works of God's hands. After God had finished his work of creation, consecrated the seventh day, and rested from his labor, we are informed that there was not a man to till the ground. This information is reasonable, and authorizes me to say, that as man stood in his created character, which is Christ, the heavenly man, he was not, at that time, formed of the dust of the ground, was not of the earth earthly, and was, therefore, not a tiller of the ground. We are then informed, by the sacred text, that God formed (not created) man of the dust of the ground, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, whereby man became a living soul, or creature. Man is now a partaker of flesh and blood; is, as the apostle says, "made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope." He has now, not an immortal, but a mortal constitution; is possessed of natural appetites and passions; and being unacquainted with the ways of his own imperfect self, knew neither the good or evil of a mortal state. If it be said that man was no mortal before he sinned, and that he became mortal by sin, it is a saying as distant from good reason as imagination can go. For if man were not mortal before transgression, he must have been immortal; if he were immortal, he was not subject to change, but remains still in the same immortal state; and all our notions about the mortality of man is nothing but

a groundless chimera. But every day's experience contradicts such absurdities.

Man, according to these statements, is of heavenly extraction; is, in his nature, allied to the heavenly state, in which he was created, before he was formed of the dust of the ground. And I call on the reason of my reader to testify to the rationality of the idea. If the mind, spirit, soul, or whatever the reader pleases to call the immortal part of man, originated from the earthly nature of the formed creature, what is the reason that the good, which supports the formed nature, does not satisfy the soul? Our natural appetites originate in the elements of which our bodies are composed, and aliment produced from them is sufficient to satisfy any natural appetite of the body; but can it give a cup of consolation to the heavenly stranger within? No; her food is of a different kind. Were the earth, with all her mines and fruits, my own, this moment, on condition that I should give up the riches which I see in this heavenly relation, my bargain would make me poor.

As man stood in his formed state, clothed with mortal flesh and blood, before his mind became obsequious to the elementary passions, a law was shadowed to his mind from the heavenly and spiritual man. The full spirit, power and beauty of the law were not perfectly understood; only a shadow of the heavenly nature passed on his mind, and the nature of that spirit being eternal and immortally pure, was opposed to the passions which would immediately

rise from the fleshy nature, and said in the understanding of the creature already made subject to vanity, "Yield not to the passions and powers of the flesh for they are death." But immediately the powerful vibrations of the fleshy nature absorbed his mind, he sought to the carnal man for food, ate and died. These things are figuratively represented in the scriptures. There man is represented as being placed in a garden of delights, to keep it and to dress it. The tree of life was in it, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; he was bid welcome to the tree of life, but was forbidden the other. A subtle serpent comes to the woman, and tempts her with the forbidden fruit; she eats, and gives it to her husband, and he also partakes. Their eyes are opened to the knowledge of good and evil; they see that they are naked, and hide themselves from God; sew fig-leaves together for garments to hide their nakedness. God comes into the garden, in the cool of the day, calls for the man, and asks him if he had eaten of the forbidden fruit. He answers that the woman whom God gave him gave unto him and he ate. The woman is next interrogated, and she lays it to the serpent's guile. The ground is cursed, for Adam's sake; when he tills it, it is to produce briars and thorns; he is to eat his bread, by the sweat of his face, and at last return to the dust. The woman's conception was to be multiplied in sorrow, and her desire was to be to her husband, and he was to rule over her. The serpent was cursed above all cattle, was to go on his belly, and to eat dust as long as he lived. This is, in short, the

scripture representation of the first sin; and I consider it to be figurative.

That the Almighty ever planted a literal garden on earth, without using man as an instrument by which he did it, I have not evidence enough to believe. The garden undoubtedly meant the moral state in which man was placed, which like a garden would become foul, if it were not dressed and kept. The tree of life, was then, what it is now, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus; and the little of that spirit which was then manifested, was all the moral life which man possessed at that time; and, therefore, all which he was able to sin against. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was what it is now, the fleshy nature, which I have before described. The opposition of the law of the heavenly man, to that of the fleshy, is meant by the prohibition. The serpent signifies the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of the heavenly man, neither indeed can be. The carnal mind getting the victory over the law of life, in the understanding of the creature, is meant by the woman's being deceived. Adam is here the figure of him who was to come; and his partaking with the woman, shows that Christ would bear the infirmities of human nature, his bride, who, in respect to individuality, should be multiplied in sorrow, but should finally turn her desire towards her Redeemer, and he should protect her. The serpent, the cursed, is the carnal mind. His going on his belly, signifies his always being moved by fleshly lusts; and his feeding on dust, teaches that carnal-mindedness never feeds

on heavenly things, but on things of an earthly nature. And we may justly observe, that after all the cultivation which is bestowed on the carnal or fleshy nature, it produces nothing better than briars and thorns.

Should it be said that this garden was a literal garden, that the tree of life was a literal tree, and that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was also literal; I should be glad to be informed what evidence can be educed in support of such an idea. Where is the garden now? Where is the tree of life now? Where is the tree of knowledge of good and evil now? Are those trees now growing on the earth as literal trees? We are not informed, in the scripture, that this garden was carried off to heaven, or that either of those trees was removed. It is written that God drove the man whom he had made out of the garden, and placed cherubims and a flaming sword at the east of the garden, to prevent the man from approaching the tree of life. If the garden were literal, why could not Adam have gone into it on the north, south, or west side? But the east is the birth-place of light, and the cherubims and the flaming sword represent the law with its executive authority, which produces guilt or condemnation in the mind, and which is the death Adam died on the very day of transgression.

The pathway of understanding is now open and clear. God saw fit, in his plan of divine wisdom, to make the creature subject to vanity; to give him a mortal constitution; to fix in his nature those faculties which would, in their operation, oppose the spirit

of the heavenly nature. It is, therefore, said that God put enmity between the seed of the woman and that of the serpent. And it was by the passions which arose from the fleshy nature that the whole mind became carnal, and man was captivated thereby. But perhaps the objector will say this denies the liberty of the will, and makes God the author of sin. To which I reply, desiring the reader to recollect what I have said of sin in showing its nature; by which, it is discovered, that God may be the innocent and holy cause of that, which, in a limited sense, is sin; but as it respects the meaning of God, it is intended for good. It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty to say he determined all things for good; and to believe he supersedes all the affairs of the universe, not excepting sin, is a million times more to the honor of God than to believe he cannot, or that he does not when he can. The reader will then ask, if God must be considered as the first, the holy, and the innocent cause of sin, is there any unholy or impure cause? I answer, there is, but in a limited sense. There is no divine holiness in any fleshly or carnal exercise; there is no holiness nor purity in all the deceptions ever experienced by imperfect beings; and these are the immediate causes of sin; and as such, they make the best of men on earth groan, and cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

If it should be granted that sin will finally terminate for good, in the moral system, it will then be necessary to admit that God is its first cause, or we cannot say

that God is the author of all good. If we say that sin is not for the good of God's system, but is a damage, we must also say that God would have prevented its taking place if it had been in his power; if it were not in his power he is not Almighty; neither can we say he is Supreme in an unlimited sense as he was not superior to the causes which produced sin. But to say that God is the author of sin, says the reader, sounds very badly, let you put what coloring you please upon it; and if I believed it I should not dare to say it. Well, what shall I say in order to please? Say the Devil was the author of sin. But did the Devil make himself? No; God made him an holy angel, and he made himself a devil, by transgression. Well, God made an angel, and that angel made a devil of himself, or anything else, proves that God was the first cause as directly as anything which I have argued. The objector will further say that that angel was made a moral agent, and therefore ought to be considered the author of his own sin. But I say, in reply, that if God produced an agency, and that agency produced sin, it argues that God is the first cause, and agency the second and effective cause. If this mode of reasoning be faulted, I ask, is not God the origin and cause of all moral righteousness? None can be perverse enough to say no; then I ask, again, if moral agency, created by God, be not the original cause of moral righteousness, by what rule of reasoning can it be made the original cause of transgression? But I have before refuted the notion about this sinning angel. I now call the at-

tention of the reader to man, which is our proper study; and attend to the objection as it respects the liberty of the will. But, in the first place, for the sake of the argument, I will consent to any liberty of the will which is contended for; and then ask, what was the cause of man's having liberty of will? My opponent must allow it was God. Well, if God produced a liberty of will in man, and that liberty of will produced sin, is there any great difficulty in seeing that that is making God the original cause of sin in every sense in which I have argued it? What would the objector wish to be understood to mean by will? If it be anything more or less than choice, I am at a loss about it. If it be choice, then what we have to look into is the liberty of choice. In order for choice to take place, the mind must have perceptions of two or more objects; and that object which has the most influence on the judgment and passions will be the chosen object; and choice, in this instance, has not even the shadow of liberty. None will be vain enough to say that will, or choice, has any liberty before it exists, and choice does not exist until an object is chosen; and to say choice has liberty to refuse an object after it is chosen, is using a violence on terms. And the same will be the conclusion if we take the word will. A person is invited by two friends to make them a visit the same afternoon, at their respective houses; he wishes to visit both but cannot at the same time. In this circumstance, honored with both their invitations, he feels at a real loss what answer to make; both insist on his compliance

with equal earnestness, and with equal influence on his judgment and passions, he still remains without a determination. To end the affair, one of his friends says, I will go with you this afternoon, and visit our friend, if you and he will return the visit next week. This decides in the mind of him who was first invited, as the other consents to the proposal. Now, choice, or will, is in favor of visiting, according to the last proposal made. Until the man willed to go, the will to go did not exist; it could have no liberty before it did exist; and after it did, to say that that will which was to go one way, was at liberty to go the other, is using the violence before mentioned. It is then evident that will, or choice, has no possible liberty. The objector will now move his position, and say it is the mind that has this liberty to choose, or not choose; to will, or not will. In order to determine this matter justly, I first ask, does the power of choosing exist in the mind, or in the object chosen? If it be answered that the power of choice is in the mind, and not in the object which influences the mind, the man who was at a loss to determine which of his friends to visit, while the objects were in equal force on his mind, was entirely ignorant of it; and admitting it was so, it might as well have been otherwise, for the power of choosing in his mind did him no good; he was after all dependent on a certain circumstance, which, being attached to one object, made it preferable to the other. Again, admitting the power of choice to be attributed to the mind, and not to the object which gives perceptions to the mind and

influences it, it must be as easy for the mind to choose a minor as a major object. It will be granted, on all sides, that persons may choose an object in preference to another, which is not half so valuable; but this is always in consequence of error in judgment. Now it is as objects appear to the mind that we ought to consider them in our present query. Supposing a poor man, who has a wife and some hungry children to feed, is offered a dollar or a guinea for a day's work; he does not know the value of either, not being acquainted with money, or its value, or the nature of the metals which are stamped with value. He consults, or means to consult, the good of those for whom he is willing to labor, and would if possible receive that which would do the most towards removing their wants; and says to himself, the dollar is much the largest, and the probability is it is worth three times as much as the guinea; it is finally his opinion that that is the case. Now I ask in relation to my argument, which of those pieces of money will he be most likely to choose? The answer is, the dollar. But I ask, why? If his mind be at real liberty, it is no more attached to the dollar than to the guinea; the influence which the dollar has on his mind more than the guinea, destroys not the liberty of the mind to choose the guinea; I wish to be told why he is more likely to choose the dollar than the guinea. Or, to alter the statement, so that the mind is not deceived: the man perfectly knows the value of both guinea and dollar. The good of his wanting family is what he means to consult; which will he be most

likely to choose in this case? Answer, the guinea. I ask, again, why? Is there any reason, or is there not? There is, and it is the greater value. Then the object governs the choice. I ask, in the above instance, had the mind any power or liberty to choose the object which appeared of the least value, and refuse that which appeared of the greatest? I am sure there is not a person in the world who would say that it had. Again, admitting, for the sake of the argument, that the mind possesses this imaginary liberty, I then ask, how came it to possess such liberty? Answer, God gave it. Then the matter stands thus, God produced a mind, and gave it liberty to will, or choose, and it wills or chooses; I ask, what is the original cause of this willing and choosing? The reader will easily see, that if I grant my opponent's arguments, it will not be to his advantage. Again, for the last time, if God gave to man a liberty whereby he can choose or refuse the same object, did he not give his creature a liberty which he did not possess himself? Did not the Infinitely Wise eternally know all that he himself would do? It must be granted. Then I ask, again, does he possess any liberty in his nature whereby it is in his power to abandon the general system contained in his divine omnisciency, and embrace one entirely different? I am sure there are but few in the world who would not say, as did the apostle, "He cannot deny himself." If the creature possess any ability which is not in his Creator, I would ask, first, where he got it? And, secondly, if the Almighty knew all the consequences which would arise from such an

ability? If the answer be in the negative, it argues that his wisdom is finite and limited, and that he does not know but this unaccountable ability of willing and choosing may finally destroy his whole plan in creation, providence and redemption! If it be granted that he did know all the consequences that would arise from this ability of willing and choosing, which is called liberty of will, it is denying its existence. For if those consequences are all known, it argues they were all certain, and none of them avoidable.

Having, as I hope, to the reader's satisfaction, answered the objections in respect to the liberty of the will, I would again invite him back to our subject.

The immediate causes of sin are found in our natural constitutions, and the most distant of those immediate causes are the same as the most distant of the immediate causes of our virtues; but the most immediate causes of our virtues and our vices are extremely different. For instance, two men meet at an inn; both of them have families which are in want of bread; they have each fifty cents, which they have just taken for their day's work. One says to the other, "Come, sit down, and we will take some drink for our comfort, after a hard day's labor." The other reflects in his mind, and says to himself, "To let my children suffer at home, to gratify my company in what is indifferent to me, would be abominable, having no particular appetite for spirits." He therefore refuses, bids his company good-night, goes and purchases necessary provisions for his family, and goes

home. He has done as a virtuous, honest husband ought to do. The other possesses a violent appetite for ardent spirits; the moment he comes where it is, his want of it overpowers his love and duty to his family,—the latter object being at a distance, and the former being nigh; he calls for drink until he spends his fifty cents, and then goes home to his expecting family intoxicated. In this, according to the scriptures, though he were a professed Christian, he is worse than an infidel.

In the mirror presented the reader may see that those two men acted equally alike from their natural wants, appetites, and passions. Had neither of them any wants, appetites, or passions, neither of them would have done anything at all. They would not have labored for the money; and if they had the money they would not have laid it out in any way possible. Therefore, we see that want, appetite, and passion, in one produced virtue, and in the other vice. But the still more immediate causes were not the same in both persons; and the consequence to them, in a moral sense, differs as much as did the most immediate circumstances which produced their conduct. One felt the approbation of a good conscience in having done what cool, dispassionate reason dictated; the other, as soon as his eyes are opened to see what he has done, is struck with condemnation for having violated the dictates of that law of prudence and equity of which he was susceptible.

A beggar, influenced by hunger, calls at the door of the affluent for food; he knows it is there, his ap-

petite is good, the object magnifies to his senses; but by one who knows the love of property more than the want of food, he is sternly denied. The beggar prostrates himself and moves his suit in language of distress, reducing his petition to only a piece of bread; the covetous man is a little moved, with some small feelings of compassion, but fearing that if he should bestow he should consequently be troubled again, bids the beggar depart, and leaves him. The beggar's object was food, and his passion hunger; he acted up to the influence of his object, and did all in his power to obtain it. The other's object was the saving of his property, and his passion was covetousness; he acted up to the influence of his object, to the gratification of his passion. Now, had the circumstance been varied so much as this, that he did not think his giving at that time would ever induce him to call again, the probability is, his object and his passion would both have been different; to feed an hungry man would have been his object, and charity his passion.

Man's main object, in all he does, is happiness; and were it not for that, he never could have any other particular object. What would induce men to form societies; to be at the expense of supporting government; to acquire knowledge; to learn the sciences, or till the earth, if they believed they could be as happy without as with? The fact is, man would not be the being that he now is, as there would not be any stimulus to action; he must become inert, therefore cease to be. As men are never without this grand

object, so they are never without their wants, which render such an object desirable. But their minor objects vary, according as their understandings vary, and their passions differ. Then, says the objector, there is no such thing as disinterested benevolence. I answer, words are used to communicate ideas; there is that often in our experience, which is meant by disinterested benevolence. An American is travelling in Europe; he meets in the street a young and beautiful fair, bathed in tears, her breast swollen with grief, and her countenance perfectly sad. His heart, fraught with the keenest sensibility, is moved compassionately to inquire the cause of her grief; he is informed that her father, in a late sickness, became indebted to his physician twenty guineas, for which he was that hour committed to gaol, when he had but partially recovered his health. Our traveller no sooner hears the story than he advances the twenty guineas to discharge the debt, and gives her fifty more as a reward for her generous concern. As our traveller did not expect any pecuniary reward, either directly or indirectly, his charity is called disinterested benevolence. But, strictly speaking, he was greatly interested; he was interested in the afflictions of father and child; their relief was his object, and charity his passion. Now did he not act for his own happiness? Yes, as much as ever a man did in life. What must have been his misery, possessing the same disposition, without the means to relieve? And what a sublime satisfaction he enjoyed by the bestowment

of his favor! Sacred truth informs us, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

We find some men honest and industrious who think, and think justly, that happiness is not to be found in any other way. Others are indolent and knavish, and they expect to obtain happiness in so being. But they are deceived in their objects, and will finally learn that they must be, what conscience has often told them they ought to be, honest and just, in order to be happy.

The objector will say, to admit that our happiness is the grand object of all we do, destroys the purity of religion, and reduces the whole to nothing but selfishness. To which, I reply, a man acting for his own happiness, if he seek it in the heavenly system of universal benevolence, knowing that his own happiness is connected with the happiness of his fellow-men, which induces him to do justly and to deal mercifully with all men, he is no more selfish than he ought to be. But a man acting for his own happiness, if he seek it in the narrow circle of partiality and covetousness, his selfishness is irreligious and wicked.

I know it is frequently contended that we ought to love God for what he is, and not for what we receive from him; that we ought to love holiness for holiness' sake, and not for any advantage such a principle is to us. This is what I have often been told, but what I never could see any reason for, or propriety in. I am asked if I love an orange; I answer I never tasted of one; but I am told I must love the orange for what

it is! Now I ask, is it possible for me either to like or dislike the orange, in reality, until I taste it? Well, I taste of it, and like it. Do you like it? says my friend. Yes, I reply, its flavor is exquisitely agreeable. But that will not do, says my friend; you must not like it because its taste is agreeable, but you must like it because it is an orange. If there be any propriety in what my friend says, it is out of my sight. A man is travelling on the sands of Arabia, he finds no water for a number of days; the sun scorches and he is exceedingly dry; at last he finds water and drinks to his satisfaction; never did water taste half so agreeably before. To say that this man loves the water because it is water, and not because of the advantage which he receives from it, betrays a large share of inconsistency. Would not this thirsty traveller have loved the burning sand as well as he did the water if it had tasted as agreeably and quenched his thirst as well? The sweet Psalmist of Israel said, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." And an apostle says, "We love him because he first loved us." What attribute do we ascribe to God that we do not esteem on account of its advantage to us? Justice would have been no more likely to be attributed to the Almighty than injustice if it had not first been discovered that justice was of greater advantage to mankind than injustice. And so of power, were it of no more advantage to human society than weakness, the latter would have been as likely to have been esteemed an attribute of God as the former. If wisdom were of no greater service to man than folly,

it would not have been adored in the Almighty any more than folly. If love were no more happifying to man than hatred, hatred would as soon have been esteemed an attribute of God as love.

Undoubtedly the Almighty loves without an influential object, as it would be erroneous to suppose that an infinite being could be operated upon. He loves because His nature is to love. An apostle says, "God is love." The sun does not shine because our earth influences it; it is the nature of the sun to shine. But all created beings love because of influential objects; and they always love according to the influence which objects have on their minds and passions. It seems, then, says the objector, that our vices are not to be attributed to the devil, but to the influence which objects have on our minds. Surely the reader ought to expect that after I have denied the existence of a being, I should, likewise, deny his power. Perhaps, however, the reader may be surprised to find that I do not believe in the existence of a being so universally acknowledged among Christian people, and which, perhaps, has been of as much advantage to some as the Goddess Diana was to the craftsmen of Ephesus. But I am willing to give my reasons for not believing with the multitude in this particular. A created individual being cannot be in more than one place at the same time. But how many millions of places must this evil angel be in at once, in order to perform the business which Christians have allotted him? In order for me to believe in such a being, I must give him the omnipresence of the

Almighty, which belongs to none, in my opinion, but my Maker. Again, to admit the existence of such a being would be of no avail, as there is nothing for him to do. There is, says the objector; he tempts men to sin. But does he tempt men contrary to their passions and the influence of their motives? Answer, no. Then the temptation is of no possible consequence. Supposing a man to be exceedingly hungry, and an agreeable meal is set before him, and he invited to refresh; at that moment the devil comes and tempts him to eat. What effect would the temptation have on the hungry man? Or, supposing, in room of tempting him to eat, he should tempt him not to eat, would he be likely to succeed? But what means the Scripture which speaks of a devil? one who was a liar from the beginning, etc. I answer I have no objection to believing that there is such a devil as the Scripture speaks of. He is called the old serpent, and is the same I have described, which beguiled the woman in the beginning; and it is the carnal mind which is enmity against God. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," said the Lord, "between her seed and thy seed." An apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, that ye cannot do the things ye would." And that this was the first beguiler, we may learn from the Scripture, which saith, "Lust, when it conceived, brought forth sin; and sin, when it was finished, brought forth death." An apostle also says, "When a man is tempted, he is drawn away with his own lusts, and enticed." Any person,

who is wholly dictated by a fleshly mind, may justly be called a devil, as in the case of Judas and Peter. As our Lord said to the Jews, also, "Ye are of your father, the devil; and the lusts of your father ye will do." But, says the objector, do you think our Saviour was tempted by the powers of the flesh when it was said he was tempted by the devil? I ask, in my turn, for what is this particular circumstance introduced? If we cannot prove, from our own experience, that we are tempted by some other being than our own fleshly appetites, would it be anything more than a speculative belief to admit another tempter? But, says the objector, that does not answer the question. Then let us look at his temptations: when he hungered he was tempted; by what? and to what? Answer, by hunger, to turn stones into bread. Here was a fleshly appetite. When he had a view of all the kingdoms of the earth, and their worldly glory, he was tempted to avail himself of them. Here was natural ambition, such as gave rise to the victories of an Alexander. When on the pinnacle of the temple, he was tempted to cast himself down, as it was written concerning him, that God would give his angels charge over him, etc. Here was that passion which gives rise to presumption, and wishes to avoid duty. But, it is said, the devil taketh him about, thus and so; not literally, however, for there is no mountain in the world that commands a prospect of but a small part of the kingdoms of the world. The exceeding high mountain on which our Redeemer stood, when he saw all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,

was the mountain of human pride. Remember, when a person is on a mountain, the mountain is beneath his feet. So was this mountain of human pride beneath the feet of our sinless Redeemer; but at the same time it gave him a prospect of all which the world calls great and glorious. In a word, the Scriptures inform us that he was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. If, therefore, we know how we are tempted, we know, also, how he was tempted. It is a sentiment of mine that we ought not to argue that for truth, in matters of this nature, which we have no knowledge of by experience.

CHAPTER III.

ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Having illustrated the original cause, and the secondary causes of sin, I pass to take notice of its consequences.

In order to have our work plain before us, I observe, sin is the fruit of the flesh, which are opposed to that true light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world. And St. Paul says they are manifest. (See Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.) "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." These are the sins which our fleshly minds are daily producing, and their consequences are witnessed by a miserable world. By these sins, with their associates, mankind is rendered miserable indeed. Social and domestic happiness is frequently destroyed. Cold and cruel jealousy murders the soft and tender passions of love, as Cain slew his brother. A garden, enclosed by the walls of fidelity, decked with the flowers of innocence, watered with the living streams of love, teeming with fruits of richest repast, and adorned with the vine of future prospects, is laid waste in an hour. Jealousy, like a foe bent on plunder, flung down the wall,

dried up the stream, and, like a devouring worm, gnawed the vine that it perished; the flowers droop, and the fruits wither away. Nothing remains but some faint vestiges of what is ruined, serving as evidence of the melancholy truth that sin has found its way to this once happy place.

Idolatry is the sin of worshipping that which is not, in reality, the true God. The old serpent could never long hold the creature in captivity if he did not allow him a god to worship and religious duties to amuse him. I have already argued that man is of heavenly extraction, that he is related to his Maker, is a dependent being; and, therefore, to worship is perfectly natural to him. Then, in order for the carnal mind to take the lead of the whole man, it must introduce a god to be worshipped, and religious duties whereby this god may be pleased, and make the creature believe that this god is the true God, and that those religious duties are of the genuine kind. But this god will surely possess all the vile passions of the old man, Adam, and those religious duties must consist in certain rites, which bear no relation to heaven-born charity, or deeds of kindness. An Almighty, omnipresent, infinitely wise and good, may be talked of; but his wisdom, power and goodness must be denied; and he must be a great many millions of miles off, fixed to a certain place, yet everywhere present; infinitely wise and powerful, yet suffers an everlasting violation of his will; possessed of infinite wisdom, yet is disappointed in his plans; loves some of his creatures, and hates others; is pleased and dis-

pleased with the conduct of his creatures; is perfectly unchangeable, yet loves at one time, and at another, hates the same object. Such an idol will answer for thousands. Now what are the consequences? Answer, one nation supposes itself the only favorite of God; other people are haters of him, and hated by him. If my God hates those who hate him, I ought to do as my God does, and I will hate them, too. One denomination of Christians has different ideas of the attributes of their God from another; they are violently opposed to each other; they are at swords' points; they call each other heretics, and doom each other to the endless wrath of their God! All such religion is of the flesh; the wisdom of it is not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish, and those who possess it are tormented day and night with it. Reader, turn over the pages of history, calculate the rivers of blood which have been shed on account of religious disputes, and ask yourself the question, is this religion worthy of a Supreme Being? The devil will have religion, and will have it maintained as long as he can; but then he must tell the people that it is none of his, but that it came from the true living God, or they will not believe it. It is an object with the old serpent to have a great many denominations, and to persuade them that they are individually right, and individually wrong, and to stir up their minds to maintain their respective tenets, and to wage war with each other, which he calls contending earnestly for the faith. Many who profess to be called by Him who loved sinners to preach the Gospel, and who pre-

tend to follow the Saviour in the path of meekness, if they happen to think a little different in matters of faith, they are filled with the greatest vehemence towards each other, which they call holy wrath, or indignation; and you might as well reason with hungry lions, or tigers, as with them, for they worship the beast, and they partake largely of his nature. Did they worship the true God, in the spirit of the heavenly man, difference in particular sentiments would not hinder their fellowship and love to one another. All the religion in our world, founded on the partial principles of man's inventions, pointing out particular modes of faith and forms of worship, is from the carnal man. Discord and contention ensue; wars and fightings are the consequences; hatred, wrath, strife, emulation, and rivalship, rage in the minds of those who possess this spurious religion. What I say is a truth of universal notoriety; and yet, what is very strange is, people are not convinced of it. As if a monstrous wolf should ravage, in open daylight, in the high and low parts of the shepherd's pasture, gorging his carnivorous appetite with the blood and fat of the flock; and the shepherd thinks it is all well because somebody, on whose sleeve he pins his faith, has told him that that creature is a sheep, and that it will do no harm! How miserable has religion made mankind! But, says the reader, it was sin that you were to tell the consequences of, not religion. I tell you, kind reader, that the religion of which I speak, is opposed to every decree of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which has ever been

revealed to mankind, and, therefore, is sin; and that which is attended with the most pernicious consequences. It is this kind of religion which takes away the "key of knowledge;" its votaries neither enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer those to enter who would. All worship, which is dictated by modes and forms, as inventions of men, is opposed to the true worship. "The Father seeketh such to worship him, who worship him in spirit and in truth." Nothing suits the carnal mind better than religion; but it must be a child of her own, and must look just like herself. The carnal mind being the hot-bed where all the roots of bitterness grow which trouble mankind, we ought to look there for the foundation of all that religion which bears the features of the serpent. Pride is the most prominent characteristic of a fleshly mind, its religion dictates to look with contempt on those who are not of the same mode of faith, who do not subscribe to the same articles of belief, and are not called by the same denomination; and says, "Stand by thyself, come not nigh me, for I am holier than thou." It dictates to give thanks for not being like others; it boasts of performances wrought with great pains and expense; it boasts of having "borne the burden and heat of the day," and dictates to expect more than others receive. "But the carnal mind," says the reader, "makes no use of the scriptures, does it?" Always, be sure, where it is fashionable to believe them, and men are despised if they do not. Anything will do, of which the creature is proud, and is willing to persecute others for not

adopting. But ought not men to be despised, and called all to naught, who do not believe the Bible to be the word of God? The old serpent will answer, yes, where it suits his turn best; but the spirit of Christ answers, no, in all cases. If the Scriptures be not the word of God, men ought not to be despised for not believing them; and if they be, they ought not to be despised, but pitied and enlightened. Remember, our acceptable High Priest was one who could "have compassion on the ignorant, and on them who were out of the way." Emulation, or rivalship, is one of the works of the flesh, and it is enmity against the meek and humble spirit of Christ; and its consequences are pernicious beyond description. In matters called religion we see much of its antiquity, as well as in natural things. One denomination wishes to rival another; one preacher wishes to rival another; and how often is it the case that professed Christians will act more underhandedly to obtain an advantage over a professor of a different denomination, than a common jockey is willing to do in order to obtain a bargain! And I will say more, I have often seen, in the same churches, persons at such variance about matters of their religion, that truth seemed not to be regarded in the least on either side; each would strive to crush his brother, until two parties were formed, and a whole town set in an uproar. This is the religion which pleases the carnal mind, but it is death. One nation looks with an envious eye on the increasing wealth and population of another. She forms a subterfuge, as a pretext for declaring war against her neighbor,

by which the two nations are drawn into a contention; a long war ensues, bringing horrors, to describe which would swell a volume to an enormous size. Look on France and England this moment, and for many years back. Who could calculate one-half the miseries produced from the spirit of rivalship between these potent rivals. How many a brave youth has fallen a sacrifice to ambition; how often has the ground drunk copious draughts of human blood; the bosom of the deep been reddened with the gore of the slain; and sharks and sea-dogs fed on the sons of mourning fathers and weeping mothers; while the leaders of this calamity make high professions of the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, and are frequently sending out their proclamations for fasts and for prayers to Almighty God to assist them in human butchery! "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not even from your lusts, which war against the soul?" It is recorded in the Scriptures that the love of money is the root of all evil. But men would have no love for money were it not for the earthly advantages obtained by it. Then the passion is covetousness, and the consequence is mischievous to mankind. One, for the sake of money, will steal, another will lie, another counterfeit the currency, and another will murder. Were it not for the sake of property, would men do these things? Answer, no. Then, in relation to what I have before argued, I ask, would men be industrious were it not for the sake of property? Answer, no; then the case is plain that they both act from the same main

passion, which is want, and to the same main object, which is happiness. But their minor objects and their minor passions vary. What need would there be of government were it not for sin? If all were willing to do as they would be done by, what an enormous expense would be saved, as it would render governmental laws useless. But by reason of men's passions and mistaken objects influencing them, our lives are exposed to be taken by our neighbors, our property pillaged, our hard earnings wrung by violence away, and our midnight slumbers interrupted by banditti, and, in short, all that is dear to us, to be taken from our enjoyment. "He who loveth not his brother is a murderer." Are not all men murderers? Do they not sometimes experience the lack of brotherly love? This murderous passion is sin; it is opposed to the language of the heavenly man in the mind; but what are its consequences? Every one endeavors to supplant his brother, no one is safe in his feelings while he is in the hands of his brother. When this passion reigns, all the tender charities of humanity are suppressed; all the bowels of compassion are frozen; a deaf ear turned to the cries and calls of the needy in distress; the poor are despised by the rich, the rich are envied by the poor; parents are dishonored by their children; children are abused, and provoked to anger by their parents. The vile affections of sin will burn to the destruction of the sweetest harmonies of nature; the whitest robes of innocence are stained with its indelible crimson; the soul is drowned in the black waters of iniquity,

and the whole mind, with every faculty, is plunged into the hell of moral death.

Yet, listen to the worst of torments in consequence of sin. "A wounded conscience who can bear?" A fire that burns all the day long, a sword that continually pierceth the soul, a sting that cannot exhaust its poison, a fever that never turns till the patient dies. "A dart struck through his liver." What ails the sinner? why his hand on his breast? There gnaws the worm that never dies, there burns the fire that is never quenched. A consciousness of guilt destroys all the expected comforts and pleasures of sin. How strange it is that after a thousand disappointments in succession men are not discouraged. Oh, sin! how you paint your face; how you flatter us, poor mortals, on to death; you never appear to the sinner in your true character; you make us fair promises, but you never fulfilled one; your tongue is smoother than oil, but the poison of asps is under your lips; you have impregnated all our passions with the venom of your poison; you have spread gloomy darkness over the whole region of the soul; you have endeavored, with your stupefactive poison, to blunt the sword in the hands of the cherubims, which, for your sake, keeps us from the tree of life.

A mistaken idea has been entertained of sin even by professors. I have often heard sincere ministers preach, in their reproofs to their hearers, that it was the greatest folly in the world for people to forego salvation in a future state for the comforts and pleasures of sin in this. Such exhortations really

defeat their intentions. The wish of the honest preacher is that the wicked should repent of their sins and do better; but, at the same time, he indicates that sin, at present, is more productive of happiness than righteousness; but that the bad will come in another world; that, although doing well is a hard way, yet its advantages will be great in another state. Just as much as any person thinks sin to be more happifying than righteousness, he is sinful; his heart esteems it, though in some possible cases, for fear of the loss of salvation in the world to come, he may abstain from some outward enormities; yet his heart is full of the desire of doing them. A thief passes a merchant's shop, wishes to steal some of his goods, but durst not for fear of apprehension and punishment. Is this man less a thief at heart for not actually taking the goods? I have been told, by persons of high professions in Christianity, that if they were certain of salvation in the world to come they would commit every sin to which their unbridled passions might lead them; even from the lips of some who profess to preach the righteousness of Christ have I heard such-like expressions! I do not mention these things to cast reflections on any person or denomination in the world; for I have a favorable hope that there are some in all denominations who are not to be deceived; but I mention them in order to show how deceiving sin is to the mind. It is as much the nature of sin to torment the mind as it is the nature of fire to burn our flesh. Sin deprives us of every rational enjoyment, so far as it captivates the mind; it was

never able to furnish one drop of cordial for the soul; her tender mercies are cruelty, and her breasts of consolation are gall and wormwood. Sin is a false mirror, by which the sinner is deceived in everything on which his mind contemplates. If he think of his Maker, who is his best friend, it strikes him with awe, fills his mind with fearful apprehensions, and he wishes there was no such being. If he think of any duty which he owes his Maker, he says, in a moment, God is a hard master, why should he require of me what is so contrary to my happiness? Religion is only calculated to make men miserable; righteousness blunts my passions, and deprives me of pleasures for which I long. But it represents stolen waters to be sweet, and bread eaten in secret to be pleasant. In a word, sin is of a torment-giving nature to every faculty of the soul, and is the moral death of the mind.

Well, says the reader, can sin have all those evil effects and not be infinite? Undoubtedly; as all those evil effects are experienced in this finite state. Thousands, who, I hope, are gone to greater degrees of rest than the most upright enjoy here, were once tormented with sin, were once under the dominion of the carnal mind. The effects of sin as sin are not endless, but limited to the state in which it is committed. This, perhaps, will be contrary to the opinion of many who read this treatise, as they are wont to suppose that there are three cardinal consequences produced by sin; viz., death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal.

As to the first of these consequences I think I have

plainly refuted it. Men die natural deaths because they are naturally mortal; but they are not mortal because of sin, for man was mortal before he sinned; if he were not he never could have sinned. My opponent will say that the death of the body is the consequence of sin when one man murders another; to which I reply one man could not murder another if men were not mortal. Sin cannot be said to be the cause of natural death any more than of natural life. I will acknowledge that sin is often the mean whereby natural life is ended, and my opposer must acknowledge that it is often the mean of persons being introduced into natural life. Perhaps an hundred are introduced into existence by illicit connections where one is taken out by malice prepense. But the meaning of the objector is that man became mortal by sin; to which I reply if immortality be corruptible by sin, the Christian hope of immortality is a vain one. The death which Adam died in consequence of sin, happened on the day of transgression, if we may believe the Scripture account about it; but Adam did not die a natural death, on that day, nor for some hundreds of years afterwards.

The way in which many have tried to reconcile the Scriptures with their traditions in this matter appears strange to me; they quote 2 Peter iii. 8: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"; and as Adam died short of a thousand years, he died in the day of transgression. But in order for the text to read to their

meaning, it ought to read thus: "One day with the Lord *is* a thousand years, and a thousand years *is* one day;" as they understand the text the conjunction *as* has no possible meaning. In respect to spiritual death I believe it was all that was meant by the word, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But if eternal death were also intended there was no recovery for man. Why divines have carried this matter so erroneously beyond all Scripture tenets I cannot imagine. But, it is said, spiritual or moral death would be eternal were it not for the dispensation of the Gospel, by which death is swallowed up of life. So we might say of anything else even of a momentary nature; it would be eternal if it were never to end. The days of a man's life would be eternal if they were never to end. The spring would be eternal if it were not succeeded by the summer. A rose would be an eternal flower if it never withered. And youth would be eternal were it not for old age and death. But what do all such arguments avail? The grand, sublime, and glorious system of God carries everything away that has its birth from mortality and time.

I have already hinted that sin might have consequences which were not evil, but not as sin. By the infinite wisdom and goodness of the Almighty, sin may be of advantage even to the sinner himself; but I say again not as sin. If the infinitely Wise and Good intended any one thing for good which we rightly call sin, that event, in respect to the divine intention, is not sin. I have introduced a circum-

stance in the fore part of this work, in which, what I am now endeavoring to illustrate, may clearly be seen. It is evident that that which Joseph's brethren meant unto evil God meant unto good. Now the immediate consequences of their sin to them was guilt of the first magnitude. Who could calculate the one-half of what they endured in consequence of the wrong which they had done? But the consequences which God intended in the issue of the event were altogether beneficial; and those who committed the sin, by the mercy of God, were made the partakers of the benefits contained in the purpose of him who meant it for good.

Again it is evident from the Scriptures that Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together against Jesus to do what the council and the hand of the Almighty had determined to be done. (See Acts iv. 27, 28). Had Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel any better meaning in crucifying Christ than Joseph's brethren had in selling Joseph to the Ishmaelites? All who read the question will answer no. But the sacred text says they were gathered together to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel had determined to be done. Now I ask, was not the determination of the murderers of Christ the same with the determination of Divine Wisdom? Says the reader, I cannot say it was not, and yet I dare not say it was. I will then answer, the Almighty intended all they did should be done; but he intended it for a very different purpose from what they did who did it. They intended the

destruction and overthrow of the doctrine which Christ preached, and they hoped the things which he had spoken concerning them would fail of taking place. But the means which they used to oppose the cause of Christ were those with which God intended to promote it. They missed of their intentions, and the Lord carried the whole of his into effect. What Christian is there in the world who will say the consequences of the death of Christ are not good? or, that those who were his murderers, for whom he prayed on the cross, will not receive an advantage from his death which they meant for evil? Or who can limit the good contained in the designs of the Almighty? But will this rule do, says the reader, to apply to all sin? I answer without hesitancy that I fully believe it. Food for the body would never please the appetite unless we first experienced hunger; the cooling spring would not be sought for if men were never thirsty; health could never be prized could we not contrast it with sickness; ease is appreciated by the remembrance of pain; and a physician would never be wanted if it were not for our infirmities; a Saviour would never have been praised by his redeemed had they never been in bondage; the song, "Thou hast redeemed us to God out of every kingdom and nation," could never be sung had redemption not been needed; a fountain would never have been opened for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in from sin and uncleanness had it not been for sin and uncleanness. Then, says my opponent, we may do evil that good may come. This objection has often

been stated to me in conversation on this subject. My reply is short. There is a self-contradiction in the objection; to do anything whatever for good is not a moral transgression. Had Joseph's brethren been taught of God that it was necessary for them to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites that he might go down to Egypt and there prepare for the famine, and they had done it for the good which God intended, it would have been no more sin in them than there was in the design of God. Then it is plain that to do evil that good may come is impossible.

Again had Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel intended the good which God intended in the crucifixion of Christ, sin would have been out of the question. St. Paul asks the question to his opposers after he had argued that where sin abounded grace did much more abound, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" And answers it thus, God forbid. How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? If we are truly enlightened into the nature of the all-abounding grace of the Gospel it causes us to die to sin; and if we are dead to sin we shall not live in it. God has forbidden it in the nature of things and rendered it impossible.

As I have limited sin in its nature, the reader will not expect to find unlimited consequences attached to it in this work. Were it so that the fulness of the divine law was perfectly comprehended in the mind of the creature and he should go contrary thereto, his sin would then be as infinite as the law transgressed; but

I argue that the law transgressed is a law formed in the mind of an imperfect being by the imperfect knowledge which he obtains of the divine law, which is no other than God himself. This knowledge being imperfect, forms a law like itself, imperfect and mutable; and an imperfect, mutable law does not afford data from which to argue endless consequences. The sacred oracle declares "the soul that sins shall die." If it had added and said, "and shall never live again," it would have carried the consequences of sin infinitely farther than the Holy Ghost intended. Sin is death to the soul as long as it sins, be that time longer or shorter. In order to argue an endless consequence we must first state an infinite cause; and as I have argued sin on a finite scale and in a limited circle, I must rationally limit its consequences.

I will now state two particulars, which the reader will find argued in the course of this work, state my opponent's objections against them, answer those objections, and introduce my second general inquiry by stating a third objection.

1st. Man is dependent in all his volitions, and moves by necessity.

2d. The Almighty has a good intention in every volition of man.

Objection first. If man move by necessity, why do the Scriptures abound with exhortations and admonitions to dissuade from sin, and so many inducements to persuade to holiness and virtue? And why are there requirements in the law to which man is under the necessity of going contrary?

Objection second. If God had a good intention in every action or volition of man, why is it said in the Scriptures that he is grieved and provoked with us? etc.

The proposition against which the first objection stands answers the objection in all its parts. It was in the system of divine wisdom that man should experience a consciousness of sin and guilt, without which, the subject of my inquiry could never have existed. If sin and guilt had never been introduced into our system, the plan of grace by atonement could never have been exhibited. Sin and guilt could never have existed providing there had been no prohibition communicated to the intelligent mind; and, on the other hand, if the mind possessed as much liberty to go contrary to inducements as it does inclination to follow them, inducements would have no possible effect; exhortations, admonitions, and warnings would be of no possible service.

If God purposed that man should come to the knowledge of his own infirmities in the way that he does, he must have intended all the means whereby the purpose might be accomplished. And if he designed that any degree of moral holiness should be found on earth such inducements must influence the minds of men which would necessarily produce it. That God does, in a strict sense of speaking, require more of any of his creatures than they are able to perform, is inconsistent with the dictates of good reason and destitute of Scripture authority; and has no better foundation for its support than an idea that

darkness originates in the sun, or light in an opaque body. But does not God require perfect holiness of man? Does he not command strict obedience to every jot and tittle of his law?

I have before argued that the spirit of God's law in its infinite fulness was above the capacity of man in a finite state in which he was made subject to vanity; and that it was the shadow of the law only that was introduced to the creature's understanding, and that for the purpose that the offence might abound. Then, says my opponent, if you are correct in this statement, does it not prove that the requirement is more than the abilities of the creature can perform? And how can the difficulty be removed?

The subject now in question is a query on which many religious disputes have arisen, and much difference of sentiments rested. Two grand parties in Christendom have been formed by it; and those two have subdivided, according to their different modes of solving those difficulties, to which they have been driven by their antagonists.

Some have contended that in the beginning man was possessed of sufficient ability to have kept the law of his Maker perfectly; but that he lost that ability by transgression; and that neither Adam nor his posterity was ever able to retrieve it; but although man has lost his ability to obey, God has not lost his right to command. This has appeared to many to be sound argument.

Supposing government had an occasion for raising an army, and should command a cripple to bear arms

and endure fatigue. The poor cripple desires consideration on account of his infirmities, but is told that his father crippled him in infancy, which, if he had not done, he would now have been able to endure fatigue; but as his father did him this piece of mischief in his infancy, he must and ought to comply with impossibilities on pain of death! This has just the same appearance of sound reason as the other.

Others have endeavored to solve this matter by placing a total inability in the will of the creature; arguing that no ability is wanting but a willingness, etc. They admit, at the same time, that the power of altering the will does not belong to the creature. These argue that this inability is criminality. I have already shown that will is a consequence arising from our perceptions of objects which proves, if our understanding were perfect, our will would be so. The criminality, therefore, might be placed on the understanding as well as on the will. The reader will observe that I am speaking of criminality, which is supposed to be seen by the Allwise in his creatures. It certainly cannot be difficult for the reader to see that there is as much inability in the understanding as there is in the will when a man is so much deceived as to think it more for his happiness to be dishonest than to be governed by the principles of integrity.

Others say Adam lost his ability to obey by transgression, but that God restored it again by the Mediator, and man possesses it now as the gift of God

through Christ; and argue that it is in the power of man to keep the law of God perfectly. If this be the case it seems that it might as well have been otherwise, as there is not a just man on earth who liveth and sinneth not. All who argue this idea acknowledge that they have been sinners; and indeed if they did not they would have no part nor lot in the son of Jesse.

Let us now state fairly this Gordian knot, and see if we can find a truth that will cut it. If it stand in a plain contradiction in words it will the better expose its difficulties, and we shall the better know how to attack it. I will state it thus, — God requires of man what he cannot perform; all that God requires of man man can perform. And now for the truth that will shine to illuminate so dark a place. Observe with attention; God's holy, just, and infinitely perfect law stands in the eternal constitution of the heavenly man, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven; it requires perfect holiness in Christ the Mediator who is the Lord our righteousness. And in him we are able to fulfil all righteousness, and stand unaccused and uncondemned. I say more, we have never violated that perfect law of holiness in the heavenly nature, but have fulfilled all it required. But we are unable to fulfil those divine requirements in our carnal, or old man. I have already hinted that perfect wisdom and knowledge were necessary in order to fulfil a perfect law. And it is in Christ alone that we find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him we possess every ability to keep the law of God perfectly;

but in the earthly Adam we have not one single faculty that is fit for so holy a service.

I may now venture to state more contradictions. I am a fool; and yet I am wise. I am weak; and yet I am strong. I am impure; and yet I am pure. I am unholy; and yet I am holy. I am condemned; and yet I am justified. I am a vessel of dishonor; and yet I am a vessel of glory. I am dead; and yet I live. I have lost my life; and yet I have gained it. I fell in the field of battle; and yet gained the victory. I am a perishable worm of the dust; and yet an immortal spirit.

When the Lord gave the tables of the covenant to Moses on the mount, he went down to the children of Israel, found them worshipping the calf which Aaron had made, and being angry thereat broke the tables which he had received. The Lord again called Moses to the Mount and gave him other tables, and gave orders for them to be deposited in the ark of the covenant, where they were preserved. By this we are taught the unsafety of the law in our hands in the earthly nature, and its safety in Christ the heavenly.

I come to take notice of the second objection. There are many passages of Scripture which represent the Almighty as possessing irritable passions like his creatures. We are told that it repented him that he had made man on the earth, and that it grieved him at the heart. These expressions are as strong in their indications of changeability as any that might be chosen. An apostle exhorts not to grieve the Holy Spirit; and it is not unfrequent that God is provoked to

anger and jealousy according to scripture. My opponent will not argue that we ought to understand those Scriptures as strictly and literally true; no man in his senses can believe them so and yet believe the Almighty unchangeable. Supposing my opponent should give his own opinion of this question; I have no doubt but he would remove the objection to all intents. I understand those Scriptures, as many others do, to be spoken according to the dark understanding of man who is ignorant of the real character of God; and according to the representations made by the law to the unreconciled mind. To admit, in a strict sense of speaking, that God was ever grieved to the heart for what he did himself, or for what his creatures do, is more than I can do and believe in the perfections of a Supreme Being. St. James says, "With God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." This expression is as strong an indication of the unchangeability of the Almighty as any that might be chosen. St. Paul informs us that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Our being led by a carnal and fleshly mind is undoubtedly what the apostle meant by grieving the Holy Spirit; as the motions or vibrations of the carnal man are opposed to those of the heavenly; but that the eternal Spirit of God ever felt grief, is more than we can rationally admit, as that would reduce the Almighty to a state of suffering. It is very evident that the Scriptures represent the Almighty in extremely different characters; and I confess I cannot reconcile them in any other way than by the two

covenants, or what is the same, flesh and spirit. Our ideas of God, while under the legal dispensation, walking in fleshly minds, are consonant to that character which the Scripture represents our Creator in, as wrathful, filled with indignation towards us for our sins, and every day angry. Those ideas which the mind entertains of the Father of all mercies, when enlightened by the spirit of the new man, and while walking in the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which maketh free from the law of sin, are altogether consonant to that endearing character given in Scripture, of our Father who is in heaven, who causeth his sun to shine on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust; who loved us while we were yet enemies, and sent his Son to die in attestation of his love to his creatures; who is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all the works of his hands; who is of one mind, and changeth not.

Says my opponent, if the Almighty govern all the affairs of mankind according to his own appointment; if he were never disappointed; suffers no violation of will; but does, in all things, and by all things maintain and support his own eternal system of divine goodness, what room do we find for the necessity of atonement, whereby peace is made by the blood of the cross?

By this question I come to my second general subject, viz.: Atonement for Sin.

Part II.

ATONEMENT FOR SIN.

CHAPTER I.

ERRONEOUS THEORIES OF ATONEMENT.

In my inquiries on this momentous subject, I shall, First, examine three doctrinal tenets on atonement; from which, I shall beg leave to dissent, and give my reasons therefor.

Secondly, Show the necessity of atonement, and where satisfaction must be made.

Thirdly, Inquire into the personage and character of the Mediator who makes the atonement, and his ability to perform the work.

Fourthly, Of atonement in its nature.

Christian divines, in general, have agreed in supposing sin to be an infinite evil, being a violation of an infinite law, and, therefore, that the law required an infinite sacrifice; short of which no atonement could be made; that the transgression of Adam brought the whole human race into the same situation of sin and misery, and subjected them all to the infinite penalty of an infinite law, which they had violated in their parent before they individually existed.

After the above agreement many different roads are taken; and divines of the greatest abilities, and of the first rank among the literati, have drained the last faculty of invention in plodding through the dark regions of metaphysics to bring up a Samuel to explain the solecism of satisfying an infinite dissatisfaction.

The plan of redemption, as held by many, may be reduced to the following compendium. God, from all eternity, foreseeing that man would sin, provided a Mediator for a certain part of his posterity, who should suffer the penalty of the law for them, and that these elect ones, chosen by God from the rest of mankind, will alone be benefited by the atonement; that in order that the sacrifice might be adequate to the crime for which the sinner was condemned to everlasting or endless suffering, God himself assumed a body of flesh and blood, such as the delinquent was constituted in, and suffered the penalty of the law by death, and arose from the dead. By this process, the demand of the law was completely answered, and the debt due to Divine Justice, by the elect, was fully and amply paid. But that this atonement does not affect those who were not elected as objects of mercy, but that they are left to suffer endlessly for what Adam did before they were born. It is true they are a little cautious about saying that God himself absolutely died! But they say that Christ, who was crucified, was really God himself, which must, in effect, amount to the same thing. And in fact if the Infinite did not suffer death, the whole plan falls, for it is by an

infinite sacrifice that they pretend to satisfy an infinite dissatisfaction.

Why the above ideas should ever have been imbibed by men of understanding and study, I can but scarcely satisfy myself; their absurdities are so glaring that it seems next to impossible that men of sobriety and sound judgment should ever imbibe them or avoid seeing them.

I have already sufficiently refuted the idea of an infinite sin, which opens to a plain path in which the mind may run, and run clear of all those perplexities which have served to confuse rather than enlighten mankind.

If sin be not infinite, the dissatisfaction occasioned by sin is not infinite, therefore an infinite sacrifice is not required. But, for the sake of illustration, we will for a moment admit that the doctrine of atonement stands on the ground over which we have just gone. I will state it as it is often stated by those who believe it, which is by the likeness of debt and credit. The sinner owed a debt to Divine Justice which he was unable to discharge; the Divine Being cannot, consistently with his honor, dispense with the pay, but says I must have what is my due; but as the debtor has not ability to pay the smallest fraction, Divine Wisdom lays a deep concerted mysterious plan for the debt to be discharged. And how was it? Why, for God to pay it himself!

My neighbor owes me a hundred pounds; time of payment comes, and I make a demand for my dues. Says my neighbor, my misfortunes have been such

that I am not the possessor of the smallest fraction of property in the world; and as much as I owe you I am worse than nothing. I declare to him, positively, that I will not lose so much as a fraction of the interest, and leave him. A friend calls and asks me how I succeeded in obtaining my dues of my neighbor; I reply, my neighbor is not, nor will he ever be able to pay me any part of my demand. My friend says he is sorry that I should lose my debt. I answer, I shall not lose it. I have very fortunately, in my meditations on the subject, thought of a method by which I can avail myself of the whole to my full satisfaction; and I think it is a method which no person in the world, but myself, could ever have discovered. My friend is curious and impatient to know the mighty secret never before found out. The reader may guess his confusion on my telling him that as I have the sum already by me, I am now going to pay up the obligation before the interest is any larger! This has been called the Gospel plan, which contains the depths of infinite wisdom.

I should be pleased to see, what I have never seen, professors following such example in obtaining what the poor widow, the fatherless, and the needy, owe them. But, says the advocate for the plan, a distinction ought to be made between the persons in the Godhead. It was the second person in the Godhead who paid this infinite debt to the first; therefore it is not altogether like a person paying his own demand. I say, in answer, if the first and second persons in the Godhead are not so essentially one as to make the

debts due to one belong equally to the other, and payment also, they are not so essentially one as to be represented by two distinct persons related only by Adam, who are in company in merchandise. But for the sake of carrying the argument still further, I will admit this variety of persons in an infinite, indivisible being! And also the plan of atonement on the principle of the second person's paying the demand to the first. And here it will be necessary to introduce the third person in the Godhead, as it is contended that the third person makes known to the debtor what the creditor determines concerning him. Then the plan of the doctrine may be represented by the following similitude: A owes B the sum of one thousand pounds; the time of payment comes, demand is made. A is not worth a farthing, neither is it in his power to raise a fraction of the money. B immediately commences a process against A, of which C, a friend of A's, being informed, goes to B, asks him how large a demand he holds against A. B informs him, a thousand pounds and the interest. And A is worth nothing? asks C. Nothing, answers B. Would you make a deduction of twenty-five per cent. if you could have the money down? asks C. Not the least deduction, answers B. You will, at least, throw in the interest, says C. Not the smallest fraction, answers B. Well, says C, if you have no mercy on the poor and distressed, I will have the pleasure of relieving the debtor alone; counts out the money in full, and receives the obligation to bestow on his friend A. B sends a servant immediately to inform A that he has

concluded to forgive him the debt. A is transported at the news, flies to tell his wife and children the tidings of mercy, and all join in praising such heavenly benevolence. C comes in, the same moment, with the obligation in his hand; modestly gives it to A, desiring him to accept it as a token of undissembled friendship. A is confounded, asks C how he came by the obligation. C informs him that he paid every farthing of the money for it, the creditor would not make the least deduction. I leave the reader to judge whether the creditor showed any mercy to the debtor, and whether B's pretensions of favoring A do not wear the appearance of hypocrisy. It is contended by those who hold to this debt and the payment of it, that the salvation of the sinner is by being forgiven; yet they contend that the debt is paid. But how I can forgive a man a debt, and oblige him to pay it, is more than I can see.

Again, admitting the system true, I wish to inquire into the propriety of an innocent person's suffering for one who is guilty. It is Scripture, reason, and good law never to condemn the innocent in order to exculpate the delinquent. Supposing a foreign court sends a person who is old in conspiracies and blood, to America, to lay a deep concerted plan to murder the President of the Union, and a number of the first officers in the Federal government, for purposes mischievous to our political existence; and he should so far succeed as to engage a number in this wicked design, and finally makes the attempt: his plans are discovered by government and detected, but not until

numbers have fallen a sacrifice to his mischievous endeavors. The leader of these seditious murderers is taken and condemned to be executed; and the voice of every friend of justice and equity is against the criminal. But what would be the consternation of the good people of the United States on being informed that the good president of the Union, the man whom the people delighted to honor, was executed in the room of this seditious person, and the wicked murderer set at liberty? Is it possible to conceive that there is a single person in the world who would call this a just execution? If it be said that the president freely offered himself in the room of the criminal, it alters not the case in the eye of justice. If an innocent man can justly be put to death because he consents to it willingly, a guilty one may be acquitted because he prefers it. But it is further argued that the authority had power to raise the president from the dead, which done, renders the work just and glorious. I say, in answer, that if the authority had this power, it might as well have executed the real criminal, and raised him from the dead, as to perform this work on one who was not guilty. What is the most shocking of anything in this system of atonement, is the partiality represented in the Almighty; for admitting the plan rational, as it respects those circumstances in which I have shown its absurdity, what can we find in Scripture or reason that justifies such infinite partiality in our Creator? or what can, in the least, serve as evidence to prove him possessed of it? Have we not reason to believe our Creator possessed

of as much goodness as he has communicated to us? Can we rationally believe that he is wanting in those principles of goodness which he has placed in our understanding? When he saw the whole progeny of Adam in the same situation by reason of sin, one no more guilty than another, why should he propose a plan of mercy for some few of them, and disregard the awful circumstances of the rest? The sacred oracle declares God to be no respecter of persons; if this be true, he is not a partial being. Jesus taught the character of God to his disciples by turning their attention to nature, observing the equal distribution of rain and sunshine, on the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust. Supposing Joseph had dealt out bread plentifully to two of his brethren in Egypt, and had starved the rest to death, would it have looked like impartiality? It is argued that none of them deserved a crumb from Joseph, whom they had sold; and if he pleased to give to one and not to another, he had a right so to do. Then, I say, he had a right to be partial. I am travelling through a large and extensive wood, and many miles from any inhabitants; I find ten persons who are lost; they have been out of provisions for several days; and having fatigued themselves in wandering from hill to hill, from stream to stream, striving, to the utmost of their abilities to find inhabitants; having given up all hopes of ever seeing their homes again, and having, in their minds, bid their wives and children a long farewell, they are waiting for hunger to do its last work! The moment I discover myself to them, with large supplies

of wholesome and rich provisions, every eye glistens with unexpected joy; the current of life starts afresh in their veins, and they all advance to meet me on their enfeebled hands and knees, with eagerness to receive the staff of life! I hasten to improve the opportunity of showing my sovereignty and goodness; I feed five of them to the full, the other five I neglect. They beg for the smallest crust, which I do not want, but to no effect. Those whom I feed solicit me, every mouthful they eat, to bestow some on their fellow-sufferers, but I refuse. I tell them, however, not to construe my conduct into partiality, but to learn my power and sovereignty by it. The five whom I have fed I assist out of the wood, and leave the rest to their wants. My conduct in the above affair appears so much blacker than my paper is white, I choose rather to leave the reader to make his comments than to write my own.

I inquire still further, did the Almighty know, before he made man that he would become a sinner? Did he know that he would deserve an endless punishment? If the answer be in the negative, it supposes God to be wanting in knowledge, and that he created beings at an infinite risk, as he did not know what would be the consequences. If the question be answered in the positive, it proves that an infinite cruelty existed in God; for unless that was the case he would never have created beings who he knew would be infinitely the losers by their existence.

Those who believe in the system which I am examining, believe in the existence of the devil,

whose existence I have refuted in this work. I am willing, however, for the sake of the argument, to admit the existence of their God and devil likewise. But I wish to inquire, which of them is, in reality, the worst being. God, when he created mankind, perfectly knew that some of them would suffer endless torment for their sins; he must, therefore, have intended them for that purpose. For, it is inconsistent to suppose that the Almighty would create without a purpose; and his purpose could not be contrary to his knowledge. The matter then stands thus, God created millions of beings for endless misery, which they could not escape; the devil is desirous of having them miserable, and does all in his power to effect it. Now, reader, judge between these two beings. Had this devil been consulted by the Almighty when he laid the plan of man's final destiny, I cannot conceive him capable of inventing one more eligible to his infernal disposition than this which I am now disputing.

As reason will not consent to the plan of God as described in the foregoing scheme, I will show that the Scriptures equally oppose it. It is granted that Jesus Christ died for mankind, as the Scriptures declare; but not in the way in which thousands have believed. But supposing he died instead of the sinner, in the way which I dispute, I still wish to prove that he died for the whole of Adam's posterity as much as he did for any. If Isaiah did not believe that that would be the case, I cannot reconcile his words to his opinion, which I find in chap. liii. ver. 5, 6: "But

he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray: We have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us ALL." St. Paul must have been of this opinion when he wrote to Timothy, or his words are not expressive of his belief. (See 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." (1st General Epistle of John ii. 1, 2). "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (Heb. ii. 9). "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." The above Scriptures, with their connections and corresponding passages, as fully prove that Christ died for ALL men, as any one thing can be proved from the Bible. Now, as there is not, in all the Scripture, a single hint to the reverse of these passages which I have introduced, it appears strange and unaccountable to me that any person who professes to believe the testimony of the Bible should ever have entertained the idea that what these passages say is false, and that which is not said, in contradiction to what is, is true!

Look, ye readers, and submit to astonishment, at what has been believed in, as divine truth. An Almighty, infinitely wise and good being creates an innumerable multitude of rational intelligences; they rebel against him, and raise an infinite dissatisfaction in his mind toward them; this infinite dissatisfaction gets removed toward part of the offenders by the sacrifice of innocence! With the rest, God is still displeased; yet he is Almighty and infinitely wise, and employs his power and wisdom to make the works of his own hand as miserable as their natures will bear, for being just such creatures as he knew they would be before he made them. But it is argued that God's knowing what sort of creatures men would be, did not influence them in the smallest degree to be what they are. Let this argument be granted. But did not God know what would influence men to be what they are? Answer, yes. Was it in his power to remove this influential cause? If it were, why did he not do it, if it were like to displease him? If it were not in his power to prevent the mischief, I wish to know whether it were in the creature's power to prevent it? If it were not in the power of either of them to prevent the operation of things in the way in which they have, and do take place, why is God's anger so warm against his poor impotent offspring? It seems an unhappy circumstance, for both Creator and creature. The Creator is not satisfied with his creatures; his creatures find themselves introduced into an existence infinitely worse than none. I am born into this world of sorrow and

trouble; the first vibration of sense is want; I endeavor to supply my wants, and to maintain my existence, which my Maker has bestowed upon me; but as soon as I come to years of understanding, I am told of an infinite debt which stands against me, which I owed thousands of years before I was born; and that my Maker is so angry with me, and has been, ever since the debt was due, that he has prepared a furnace of endless flames to torment me in, according to the due requirements of justice! My father gives me his farm, and puts me in possession of it; I am pleased, and prize it very highly. In consequence of my possession, I paint to myself many pleasing prospects; but, to my mortification, a person comes and presents me with a mortgage of my farm for five times its value, the mortgage running so as to hold the possessor to clear it; I will leave the reader to say whether my father was kind or unkind. Yet the circumstance into which the Almighty has introduced millions of his creatures, is infinitely worse according to the doctrine which I am examining. It is argued, with much assurance, that God has a just right to do with his creatures as he pleases, because he has it in his power so to do; and that he never does anything because it is right; but what he does, is right because he does it.

If the above statement be just, moral holiness consists in the power of action, and not in the disposition that designs the action. If so, my argument in favor of sin's existing only in the design of the actor and not in the action, is groundless; and we are driven to

say that unholiness, or sin, is the want of power to perform an action; and holiness consists in having the power to do it. One man designs to murder another for his money, he makes the attempt, and fails; his sin consisted in not having power to execute his design; but in the design there is no evil. On the other hand, he makes the attempt, and succeeds; here is no evil at all, because he had power to do it. On this principle, everything that can be done is moral holiness; and everything that cannot be done, is sin, or moral evil.

Here we are presented with a picture the most to be dreaded of anything which the imagination of man is capable of inventing. Power moving on in front, exhibiting tyrannic majesty in every action; and meagre justice in the rear, obsequiously pronouncing all right! If these things be so, our senses are nothing but mediums of deception; and all our experience has served us no other purpose than to make us more ignorant. Who is there in the world, possessing common sense, that does not dread and revolt from power, in every instance, where they see it connected with an evil disposition? Are we right in wishing our enemies weak? We are, and that because their strength being directed by their wicked designs, gives us fear.

But, for the sake of the argument still further, let it be granted, that God being supreme, had a right to do because he had the power. And he creates millions of beings, whom he intends for endless torments, and puts his whole design into execution; and this is

called supreme goodness. Now I wish to know how a supreme evil could be described? All will grant that evil is in opposition to good; then an opposite description would be just. To create, with an intention to make eternally happy, and to put that design into execution, would be supreme evil! But, according to the doctrine which I am examining, God contains these two characters in himself, having created some for one purpose, and some for the other. It will be of no advantage to the reader to have the absurdity of the above proposition any more exposed than enough to have it rejected. I never heard or read any argument to prove the propriety of the disputed proposition. It is a begged proposition, and stands without the least shadow of evidence from Scripture or reason; but it requires no great ingenuity to see what the chimera was invented for; without it, the whole plan and scheme of atonement, which I am now examining, would fall for want of foundation.

There are some of Paul's writings to the Romans, which have been used by divines, to prove the partial plan of salvation true, of which, I think it will be proper to take notice in this place. Rom. ix. 21, 22, has been made great use of in order to prove that God made some men vessels of eternal dishonor, and others vessels of eternal glory. The words read as follows: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to

destruction." In order that the reader may see that the passage has not the meaning which has been generally attached to it, let him observe that the two vessels mentioned in the text are made of the same lump; which also may be seen in God's communication to Jeremiah. (See Jer. xviii. 3, 4): "Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels, and the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter, so he made it again another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to make it." Observe, the first vessel being marred, was dishonorable, and it marred in the potter's hand. The potter did not make the vessel perfectly sound and good, and lay it away whole, and the vessel mar itself afterwards; but it marred while in the hand of the potter. The potter did not condemn the clay as good for nothing because it marred; he did not cast it away and take other clay to make another vessel; but of the same clay made a vessel as it seemed good unto him to make it. This vessel not being marred, was a vessel of honor. Here the reader may see the power of God manifested in making of the same lump a vessel of honor and a vessel of dishonor.

The thread of the apostle's discourse to the Romans, in which he introduced the passage above written, was intended to show the distinction between law and gospel, or flesh and spirit; by turning to the eighth chapter, the reader will find himself assisted in the introduction of this particular. We then say that as man stands in the earthly Adam he is a marred vessel. Christ himself, when for us he was made a sin-offering,

in the fleshly nature was "more marred than any man, and his form than the sons of men." But in his resurrection, he was a vessel of honor and immortal glory; "and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Further, see the two vessels described in 1 Cor. xv. 41: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Again, Rom. xi. 7, etc.: "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them; let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway."

On this passage, and others like it, is built the doctrine of limited salvation, by Jesus Christ, according to the foreknowledge and predestination of the Almighty. It is argued that those who are here called the elect are those for whom Christ died, and those alone who will finally obtain salvation by him. But why any person should make such a mistake in reading this chapter I am at a loss. The salvation of the elect is not argued in this chapter; but the certainty of the salvation of those who were blinded, and the propriety of believing it, occupies the greatest part of it. Ob-

serve the words next to those I have quoted above, verse 11, etc.: "I say then have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their full salvation is come unto the Gentiles to provoke them unto jealousy. Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" Again, verse 15: "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" Again, in his argument to the Romans, he endeavors to show them, by the similitude of the branches of olive trees, that they ought to believe that those blinded ones, though broken off through unbelief, would be graffed in again. See verse 24: "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?" The apostle seems desirous to instruct the Roman Church, and argues the point fervently. (See verses 25, 26): "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits), that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Compare the last verse which I have quoted with Levit. xxvi. 44, 45. "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies I will not cast them away, neither will I

abhor them to destroy them utterly and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, in the sight of the heathen that I might be their God: I am the Lord." And Is. xlv. 25: "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Many like passages might be quoted from various parts of the Scripture; but, perhaps, the above will suffice for this particular purpose. More, of the like nature, will be noticed in the sequel of this work.

The Scriptures have been as much violated, to maintain the doctrine which I am examining, as good reason is, by supposing God to be so infinitely partial, as he must be, in the eye of reason, in order to be what the doctrine represents him.

I shall now invite the attention of the reader to another system of atonement, which was undoubtedly formed with a view to shun the absurdities in the former, and to get rid of some of the consequences that were naturally deducible from that idea of the sufferings of Christ. This system supposes that the atonement by Christ was not intended for the salvation of any part of the human race; that its main end and sole object was the glory of the Supreme Being as manifested in his holy and righteous law. In support of this plan it is argued that it is inconsistent for infinite wisdom and goodness to prefer an inferior object to a superior one; that all creation, when compared with the Creator, sinks into nothing, bearing no

possible proportion to the infinite Jehovah; of course that God always has his own glory in view as his supreme object in all he does.

This plan agrees with the former in supposing sin to be of infinite magnitude and deserving of endless punishment; that as the law of God is infinite like himself, finite man is infinitely to blame for not fulfilling all his requirements; and that the penalty of the law is endless misery, which misery Christ sustained; not with a view of acquitting the sinner, nor in room and stead of the transgressor as is supposed in the other plan; but for the honor of divine justice and the glory of his Father. It is further argued that by Christ's suffering the penalty of the law, justice is as fully satisfied as if all mankind had been made miserable for an eternity. And this being the case, it is now just and right for God to acquit as many of the sinful race of Adam as is consistent with his grand object, which is himself; yet, by no means rendering it unjust for God to punish, to all eternity, as many as is necessary in order for the satisfying of the same grand object.

I first inquire into the propriety of the argument on which this plan of atonement seems to be founded; which is, that God always acts for his own infinite and incomprehensible glory; never stooping so low as to act with an intention for the good of his creatures.

1st. I ask is God as infinitely glorious as he can be or not? If it be answered that he is; then if his object in all he does is to augment his own glory, he never has, nor will he ever accomplish his intention.

If it be argued that it is not to augment his own glory, but to secure it and maintain it in its proper splendor, it argues it to be of a perishable nature, and that it would decay were it not for the continual vigilance of the Almighty in preserving it. If it be argued that neither of these objects is right, but that it is the manifestation of his glory to intelligent beings, which is the grand design or object of God in all his acts without any reference to the effect which this manifestation has on those to whom it is made, I say the object has now dwindled into annihilation; there is not the smallest imaginable atom of it left. To suppose that any rational being can wish or desire to accomplish any piece of labor without having any reference to the consequences, is too glaringly absurd to need refutation. Now the nature of the proposition, which I am examining, confines the motive of Deity within himself and himself from his creation. In order, therefore, to look at the Almighty as he is by this doctrine represented, we must look at him as destitute of a creation, and view him abstractly from all his creatures. But may I ask what title to give that being of whom we speak? The name Jehovah truly has reference to his self-existence and to his character as the giver of existence also. The name God implies a being who is worshipped. Lord signifies a possessor. "I am that I am" has reference to an unchangeable being, but does not determine a being of goodness. I ask again what do we know of an Almighty only by his works? If his existence can ever be determined by any other means, I am ignorant

of the way. What do we know but by our senses? Have we any sense of good or evil that does not concern created beings? We may say, if we please, that God acts for his own essential good abstractly from his creation; but what do we mean by it? An action, for the good of any being, presupposes that being in want; and if in want, then not infinitely happy. If God be not infinitely happy he never can be. I inquire further, by what data can we determine that God is a good being? Can we determine it by any other criterion than by the effects of what he does as it concerns his creatures? The truth undoubtedly is, that just as far as we can look into creation, providence, and redemption, and see the harmony and beauty of them, and see that all were calculated for the good of created intelligences, whom these things concern, we are satisfied that he who conducts the whole is a good being. And if we say he is good, without this understanding, we acknowledge a proposition for which we are unable to adduce the smallest reason. Again, is it not wrong to make a separation where the Almighty does not? Is he not perfectly joined to his creation? Do we not live, move, and have our being in God? Were we not created of his fulness? Had Deity anything of which to create beings but his own eternal nature? I know it has been said that God created all things out of nothing, etc.; but such an idea never will be imbibed by me until I can form, in imagination at least, a notion of how much nothing it takes to make the least imaginable something. If all things were created

of the infinite Jehovah, as great a part of his creation as we take from him, so great a proportion we take from his fulness. God never could be more than infinite in his fulness; then, to take the smallest creature from him, which he created of that infinite fulness, you have left something less than infinity. Now, if it be argued that God acts for the good of himself, considering his creatures to belong to his fulness, I am perfectly agreed; but to say that the Almighty has, or ever could have a motive, in action, that did not embrace every consequence that could arise from what he did, would be limiting his omniscience; or to say that he did not intend good to all whom his acts concern, would be limiting his goodness and an impeachment on his justice.

I have before, in this work, contended that all the attributes which we ascribe to God we call good, on account of the advantages which we derive from such principles. We are told of a God who acts for his own benefit abstractly from his creation; and that in millions of cases he finds it most for his glory to make his rational, hoping, wanting creatures endlessly miserable; and this is called goodness. We are likewise told of a devil who acts for his own gratification, and who delights in making God's creatures miserable; and this is called badness. But, for my part, according to such statements, the difference between goodness and badness is so small I can hardly distinguish it. It is profane, in my opinion, to attribute a disposition to the Almighty which we can justly condemn in ourselves. A man who should act from such a selfish

principle as is attributed to God, would render himself wholly unworthy of the protection of common law. And shall we thus represent our kind and merciful Father, from whom ten thousand streams of goodness continually flow to his wanting and needy creatures? No; let every vibration of sense within us acknowledge his bountiful hand, which is never closed.

I have already labored, in this work, to show that sin is finite, and not committed against an infinite law. I shall, however, now call into examination a subject something like it, which is that of penalty; as it is contended that the penalty of God's law is endless punishment, etc.

I first inquire why does a legislature affix penalties to laws which it makes? Answer, the first reason is, the strength and security of government. 2d. That the punishment may serve to reclaim the delinquent. 3d. That the punishment of a criminal may serve to deter others from the commission of like crimes. 4th. In many cases, to keep the delinquent, by confinement or death, from doing any more mischief.

Now let us look into the government of an Almighty Being, and see how the matter of penalty will operate there. Observe the penalty is endless misery. I ask, is this necessary to secure the government of an Almighty Being? Would his government be in danger if this penalty were not enacted to his law? Supposing a legislature of men had the power in their hands of causing all the community on whom its laws were binding to love their laws in every requirement, and with vigilance to attend to the faithful discharge

of their duties in all things, would it be necessary for them to enact penalties to their laws? Allowing the legislature to have such power, who, in the world, would say, it is not best to exercise it; that it is better to have penal laws, and let the people have their wicked, obdurate hearts, so that now and then we may have a poor criminal to execute? I can hardly believe that any will contend that penalty is necessary in the law of God in order to secure his government. Is there any scruple respecting God's power to turn the hearts of his creatures as he pleases? If there be not, then there is no need of a penalty in his law, in order for the security of his government.

2d. Is this penalty necessary in order to reclaim the delinquent? Answer, that is impossible. The penalty being endless punishment, it can have no object in reclaiming the punished. The execution of such a penalty on any of God's creatures would prove the contractedness of his goodness, as no possible good could be communicated to a victim of such punishment. Divine truth says, God is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all the works of his hands. To say God is good to a creature of his whom he irrevocably dooms to endless torments, is a violation of our senses; and no person, in a moment of sobriety, will believe it. It is then evident that such a penalty would not be necessary to reclaim the sinner.

3d. Is it necessary to inflict such a penalty on the transgressor, in order to deter others from the commission of sin? Answer, no; for, according to the doctrine which I am examining, the first transgression

committed involved the whole human race in the delinquency; and an execution of such a penalty would be the endless misery of the whole family of man; there would not have been one left to be deterred from sinning, or even to tell the news!

4th. Is such a penalty necessary in order to keep the sinner from sinning any more? So far from that, this penalty would fix the delinquents in a situation in which they could do nothing but sin to an endless eternity. No moral being can be miserable as suffering conscious guilt without sin; therefore, in order for endless misery to be inflicted, endless transgression is necessary.

Look, kind reader, and see what an absurdity lies here. Because a being has sinned once, the law which he violated requires that he should continue in transgression! Well, he complies; will the law justify him? But, says the reader, I do not understand you. Why, the matter is plain; if a moral being cannot be miserable without sin, he must continue in sin in order to be miserable. Then, if God's law requires endless misery, it requires endless transgression! But, it is argued, that a law cannot exist without a penalty. This, undoubtedly, is an error. The largest signification of the word law, is governing power. (See Rom. vii. 23). "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of sin, which is in my members." This law of sin in the members, which brings the man into captivity, is undoubtedly the power of the flesh, which lusteth

against the spirit, that we cannot do the things we would. Now, I ask, is there any penalty to this law? Does this law administer any condemnation to those who do not obey it? Most surely it does not. Then pass to the eighth chapter and third verse; "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This law is undoubtedly the governing power of the heavenly nature, which overcomes the carnal mind, and delivers the soul from the bondage of sin. I ask, again, is there any penalty to this law? Is there a dispensation of condemnation administered by this law of life? Truth says, the wages of sin is death. Does this death flow from the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus? Surely not. "To be carnally minded is death." If carnal mindedness be that death which is the wages of sin, surely it does not flow from the spirit of life. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace."

God's moral law is like himself, love. "God is love, and he who loveth dwelleth in God and God in him." It requires all moral beings to love God and each other; and the reason why it commands this, is, it is love itself. True, that soul is miserable that does not love God, and the reasons are, love is the life and happiness of the soul, and hatred is its death and misery.

Although I think I have given unanswerable reasons why I do not admit such a penalty as I have examined, I will, for the sake of the argument, still further allow it, and inquire into Christ's suffering it.

To say that Christ has suffered such a penalty is

a contradiction in terms, because an endless duration has not yet expired. To say that this penalty ever will be suffered by Christ, or any other being, is another contradiction in words; for an endless duration will never expire. Then to say that such a penalty has been, or ever will be suffered, is erroneous.

If it be argued that Christ was an infinite person, and therefore could suffer an endless punishment in a few moments, I answer, it is not shunning the contradiction. If the position be moved, and the argument is, that he being infinite, could suffer as much, in a few moments, as all mankind would to an endless duration, I ask are there more infinite beings than one? All answer, no. I ask, again, is it possible for that infinite being to suffer? Even from my opponent, the answer will be that the infinite himself did not suffer; but that it was the finite nature which suffered, and was raised from the dead by the infinite; that it was the human nature which was made a sin-offering; and that the divine nature gave victory to the human by raising it into an immortal life. Well, then, the sufferings were finite, and could, by no means, answer the requirements of an infinite penalty.

The particular difference between this plan and the former is in the intentions of the sufferings of Christ. The former supposes that Christ suffered in room and stead of the sinner, so as to acquit all those from condemnation for whom he died. This argues that the intention of the sufferings of Christ was not the salvation of sinners; but, as I have before observed, the glory of the Supreme Being. But that by the suffer-

ings of Christ the law is perfectly magnified and made honorable; and that it is just for God to acquit as many of the sinful race of Adam as is consistent with his glory; but does not render it unjust for him to punish endlessly as many as is necessary for the same grand object.

Now admitting the penalty of the law to be endless, and that Christ suffered it in full, the law cannot now require the destruction of the offender; how then can we reasonably argue that it is for the glory of God to punish when justice does not require it? If justice do require it now of any, it does of all. If it be argued that divine justice does not require the endless happiness or misery of man, I say it is not a law which concerns mankind; and if we say God's will in the misery of mankind extends farther than the requirements of his justice, it is setting the Almighty against himself. Again, admitting such provisions to be made as render it consistent with justice, that all sinners should be emancipated from death and misery, does eternal love and mercy require less?

Supposing five hundred Americans are in slavery at Algiers: our consul demands the price of their redemption per man; he is answered the price of one is the price of the whole; and the price of the whole is the price of one; the sum is five hundred dollars. This, the Dey says, is not a consideration for the slaves, but to show America, or the United States, his power and the dignity of his government. Our consul obtains the money and pays it. Now, reader, do you think he would confine the benefits of this ransom-

money to a small part of those unfortunate Americans; and out of five hundred send but fifty home to their wives, children, country, and friends; and tell the remaining four hundred and fifty that the money was his own, and he had a right to extend, or not extend the benefits of it, as he pleased; and that it was his pleasure that they should all wear out a miserable life in slavery, where they might dream of liberty, but never enjoy it? The smallest degree of humanity would argue better things.

We have now examined the foundation of this plan of atonement, and it has removed out of our sight; we have sought carefully after the penalty of the law, and cannot find it; we have sought for the satisfaction of such penal requirements, admitting they did exist, and find them not; we have admitted, for the sake of the query, that such satisfaction did take place, and we have sought for the consequences which are argued, and find them inconsistent with such premises.

Taking my leave of this plan of atonement, I shall introduce a third one, from which I shall also dissent, and give my reasons for so doing. The plan agrees with the former in respect to the law, its penalty, and the personage of him who makes the atonement; but differs, in respect to the intentions of God, in the atonement. As far as the first transgression concerned mankind, it is believed that the atonement by Christ is fully efficacious; and that no man will, or can be miserable forever, on account of what is called original sin. And that by virtue of the sufferings of Christ, Adam and all his posterity were immediately placed

in a state of trial, or probation, after the fall, such as Adam was in before, but with this difference, viz., man now knows good and evil, and is possessed of strong appetites to sin; but has also a portion of the divine Spirit, which is given to every man, for his profit, to assist him in opposing those appetites, and subduing them.

Those who believe in this plan believe that it was in the power of Adam, as a moral agent, to have stood in a state of holiness and innocency; and that it is now in the power of every man, as a moral agent, to obtain the paradise which Adam lost. They do not admit that Christ died for our actual transgressions after we come to years of discretion; but of these we must repent and beg for mercy, and God will forgive on our humble and sincere application. The sum of this plan of atonement made salvation possible unto all men, but certain unto none. It argues that it is the will of God that all men should be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth; that all should repent of their sins, and receive the Redeemer on the reasonable terms upon which he is offered to us.

Those who believe in this plan, believe it possible for men to neglect those privileges, slight those merciful offers, and turn a deaf ear to all the warnings of the Spirit, until the day of their probation is ended, whereby all that the Saviour has done is made of no effect unto them. And that thousands will be thus neglectful, and be miserable as long as God exists; not, however, for the sin which Adam committed, but for their own personal transgressions.

Before I put the foregoing system of atonement under examination, I will take notice of the character of the Mediator as believed in by all those who hold to the several systems of which I have taken notice, as I have not examined that particular in my inquiries on the other systems preceding the one under consideration. They all contend that the Mediator is really God; that the Godhead consists of three distinct persons, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that these distinct persons are equal in power and glory, and eternally and essentially one.

The reader will observe my usual mode of reasoning, which is to admit as truth what I wish to oppose: and to oppose it with the consequence which necessarily follows. For the sake of argument, then, I admit the foregoing statement of the character of Christ to be just; and then I contend that if he be the Son of God, he is the Son of himself, and is his own father; that he is no more the Son of God than God is his son! To say of two persons, exactly of the same age, that one of them is a real son of the other, is to confound good sense. If Jesus Christ were really God, it must be argued that God really died! Again, if the Godhead consists of three distinct persons, and each of those persons be infinite, the whole Godhead amounts to the amazing sum of infinity multiplied by three! If it is said that neither of these three persons alone is infinite, I say the three together, with the addition of a million more such, would not make an infinite being. But supposing we get over all those absurdities with as much ease as a miscalculation

avoids the truth; and suppose that these three distinct persons formed the grand council in heaven, on the salvation of man, after the first transgression.

In this council, and on so momentous an occasion, the first person addresses the other two, saying, the colony which we have just planted on our new-made earth has rebelled, and you know the penalty, which is endless misery, must be immediately executed on the two delinquents, unless a dispensation can be devised more favorable to the offenders, and equally satisfactory to justice. As the attribute of justice spake in the first person, that of mercy speaks in the second, and proposes a pardon. Justice opposes, and contends that his honor depends on the penalty's being put in execution. Mercy again replies, the second person in the Godhead shall suffer the penalty due to sin, and justice shall grant man a second probation, in which he may secure the life, which he, by rebellion, lost. That reasonable conditions should be proposed, and the third person should make them known to man, and give him proper directions how to fulfil them; and if man faithfully attend to these conditions, he secures his happiness; if not, mercy makes no more requests in favor of the offender. To this all agree; and it is registered accordingly.

It seems, according to this plan, that man utterly failed on the first trial, but now has the second opportunity. I would ask is there any more certainty of his succeeding now than there was before? Is it certain, according to this plan, that any of Adam's posterity will obtain salvation? Is it not in the power of all

men to neglect those conditions? If it be not, it destroys the nature of conditions and of probation; if it be, then it is entirely uncertain whether an individual soul will ever be saved by the Gospel plan.

I have before shown it erroneous to suppose that any finite being could suffer an infinite punishment in any period of time; and I think it is also granted that an infinite being cannot suffer. But admitting the system of atonement to stand on the ground contended for, it was a matter of utter uncertainty whether it would, in any instance, prove efficacious as it respected the salvation of man.

A rich parent gives a large portion to his son, accompanied with good advice; the son turns prodigal, spends all, and gets into prison for debt. The father still loves the son, pays his debts, lets him out of prison, sets him at liberty, and gives him a thousand pounds more, which is all he ever can give him, and tells him to be more prudent. The prodigal, no sooner than he finds himself thus liberated, and in possession of a handsome property, goes into the same error, which brought him to ruin before, and finally meets the same consequences. The father has no more to give, and the son becomes a vagabond. I ask, did the parent act the part of wisdom any more than the son did? If he had acted wisely, would he not have said to him, Son, I gave you much at the first; I gave you good advice; I told you that industry and prudence alone would secure you from want; I told you, though your property were large, unless you put your money to interest, or into trade, it must

dwindle; that if you threw away your time in vain and foolish prodigality, the end would be what you have already experienced? And although I hoped better things of you than a total neglect of my admonitions, yet I feared; and for your good have reserved one thousand pounds of what I intended to give you, which, had you been economical, I should by this time, have committed to your care. But, as you have conducted so foolishly, I must, for your benefit, keep the remainder of your portion until you prove yourself a convert from prodigality to economy.

If the Almighty were ignorant at first when he put man in possession of privileges which he afterwards abused, it astonishes me that he should risk the last favor which he had to bestow on principles which he had just seen fail. It will undoubtedly be acknowledged by all that Jehovah knew as perfectly before transgression as afterward what man would do, and how he would dispose of the advantages which he had bestowed on him. Then I ask if God knew how man would abuse those privileges, and knew he would be eternally miserable in consequence, was it an act of kindness in God to grant man such privileges? I ask again was it possible for that to fail which the Almighty perfectly knew would take place? The answer will be, no. Then, when we have consolidated the whole down to its real self, all the privilege which God gave to those whom he knew would render themselves objects of his displeasure, was a privilege of incurring to themselves endless misery; I say more, he insured

it to them himself by putting that into their hands by which he knew it would be effected.

I give my child a loaded pistol, which I tell him to discharge at a serpent on his way where I have ordered him. I know perfectly well, when I give him the pistol, that he will carelessly blow his own brains out with its contents, and the serpent will go unhurt; the child's end happens accordingly. I leave the reader to judge whether I am the murderer of my child; my conscience will inform me.

The Mediator suffered the penalty of the law to reinstate man in a state of probation; God made a revelation to mankind for their instruction; he inspired the ancient prophets to speak of the things of his kingdom; sent his holy Spirit into the world to lead and guide man into all truth; and all this is done from the pure benevolence of God towards a sinful world for its everlasting welfare, but all upon uncertainties! After all, man has it in his power to frustrate the whole plan of grace, and render it abortive! Oh, ye angels of celestial purity, had ye known this, ye would not have sung, on the auspicious birthday of Emanuel, "Great joy, which shall be unto all people."

On the other hand, it was possible for every son and daughter of Adam to accept of Christ, on the very easy terms of Gospel obedience, and thereby to have secured the heavenly kingdom. This being granted, who knows they will not do it? Things that are possible may be done; and who can say, for cer-

tainty, that those things which are possible, will not be effected? If it be an absolute certainty that any will finally fail of gaining the prize, it is also an absolute certainty that they have no possible opportunity for it. If there be an opportunity, and the prize be attainable by all, there is at least some room for hope; and were it the real Christian hope, it would be like an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast; but being founded in the creature, and not in God, it is wavering and doubtful.

On this system, it must be absurd to argue the certainty of the endless misery of any of the family of man, as the salvation of the whole is possible. God, out of love to his creatures, made it possible for them all to obtain salvation; indeed, it is his will that all should be saved from their sins; it is, also, the will of Christ, and of the holy Spirit; it is the will of all holy beings in heaven, and of the saints on earth; prayers are daily offered up, from the altar of sacrifice, for its accomplishment. And if be not done, the whole Godhead will be disappointed; mourning, instead of rejoicing, will be the employment of holy angels, and the saints will be stung with the keenest sensations of grief.

No one will dare to say he believes God can be disappointed in any of his purposes; therefore, those who believe in the system last examined, must be dissatisfied with it, if their eyes should ever be opened to see its consequences.

Having examined those several systems of atone-

ment in as concise a method as was convenient, and having given my principal reasons for not adopting either, I now beg the attention of the reader to my second inquiry, namely, the necessity of atonement, and where satisfaction must be made.

CHAPTER II.

NECESSITY OF ATONEMENT, AND WHERE SATISFACTION MUST BE MADE.

I HAVE already entered my protest against the necessity of atonement, on the principles upon which Christians have generally believed it, by showing the finite nature of sin, and the error of supposing that the law of God required the endless misery of mankind as a penal requisition.

Atonement signifies reconciliation, or satisfaction, which is the same. It is a being unreconciled to truth and justice which needs reconciliation; and it is a dissatisfied being which needs satisfaction. Therefore I raise my inquiry on the question, Is God the unreconciled or dissatisfied party, or is it man?

For our assistance on this question, let us turn our attention to God's dealings with Adam on the day of transgression, and the conduct of Adam, the transgressor. After Adam had eaten of the forbidden fruit, his eyes opened to the knowledge of good and evil, and he found himself naked, and endeavored to hide himself from God, which he certainly would not have done had he considered his Maker his friend. Sin produced two errors in the mind of Adam, which have been very incident to mankind ever since; the

first was, he believed God to be his enemy, in consequence of disobedience; and, secondly, that he could reconcile his Maker, by works of his own. The first of these errors we discover from Adam's endeavoring to hide from God; and the second is seen in his endeavoring to clothe himself with the works of his own hands. It is plain that a material change had taken place in Adam; but can we prove that any alteration happened in God? It is very evident that Adam was unreconciled to God; but it is equally as evident that God was not unreconciled to him. God's calling Adam, in the cool of the day, and asking him where he was; clothing him with a garment of skins, and promising that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, are beautiful representations of the parental love and fatherly care of the Creator. It ought to be observed that God pronounced no curse on Adam, but on the serpent. If the Almighty had been unreconciled or dissatisfied with his creature man, in room of promising him a final victory over the serpent, the curse would undoubtedly have fallen on the object of his displeasure.

To say that God loved man any less after transgression than before, denies his unchangeability; but to say that man was wanting in love to God, places him in his real character. As God was not the unreconciled party, no atonement was necessary for his reconciliation. Where there is dissatisfaction, it presupposes an injured party; and can it be hard to determine which was injured by sin, the Creator or the sinner? If God were unreconciled to man, the

atonement was necessary to renew his love to his creature; but if man were the unreconciled, the atonement was necessary to renew his love to his Creator. The matter is now stated so plainly that no person who can read can mistake.

I shall now endeavor to prove, from Scripture, that the atonement by Christ was the effect and not the cause of God's love to man. (See St. John iii. 16.) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." According to this passage, nothing is more plain in Scripture than the idea that what Christ did for sinners, was a consequence of God's love to them. Again, verse 17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." This passage says that God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world; but according to the general idea of the atonement, Christ stood as the proxy of man, and the world was tried in him, and condemned in him, and in him suffered the penalty of the law which man had transgressed. It is also said, in the text, that Christ was sent, that the world through him might be saved; which, if true, goes to prove, that the Father's object, in Christ's coming into the world, was the salvation of the sinner, and not for the removing of any dissatisfaction in himself towards them. Again, see Rom. v. 8: "But God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." As the death of Christ is here spoken of as a commendation of God's

love to us, it ought to be considered as an effect and not the cause of that love. Again, 1st epistle of John, iv. 9: "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." If Christ's coming into the world were a manifestation of God's love to us, this love must have existed before he came, and his coming was an effect produced by it. Verse 10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins." Verse 19: "We love him because he first loved us."

From those passages, and many more which might be quoted to the same effect, it is easy to learn that what the Mediator did for sinners, was the consequence and not the cause of God's love to us. God being infinite in all his glorious attributes, he can by no means love at one time and hate the same object at another. His divine omniscience comprehended all the events of time and eternity; therefore nothing could take place to remove his love from an object on which it was placed. The Almighty had no occasion to dislike Adam, after transgression, any more than he had even before he made him; for, he knew as well then, that he would sin, as he did after it was actually done. The reason that we mortals love an object, at one time, and dislike it another, is the weakness of our understandings; we have not always the same view of the same object. We may slight an object of great value, its excellence being out of our sight; and we may set our affections on one of no value by errone-

ously attaching a value to it which it did not possess. But the Infinitely Wise is subject to no mistakes; he comprehends the whole futurition of all moral beings, and loves them as his own offspring, with a love consistent with his immutable existence. Therefore, it is evident, that God was not the unreconciled, and, of course, did not require an atonement to reconcile himself to his creatures.

Let us now turn on the other side, and see if man be not unreconciled to God; and if it would not be more reasonable to reconcile man to his Maker than to reconcile God to the sinner. (See Psalm xiv. 2, 3.) "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

The apostle Paul, in the third chapter of Romans, giving a general description of mankind, introduces it with the passage from Psalms, which I have just quoted, and continues it by an assemblage of various passages (see verse 13, etc.). "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." It is very evident that the apostle meant to exclude none from this description, as the reader may learn from verse 19: "Now we know, that what thing soever the law saith,

it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Again, chapter v., verse 12: "Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." That the Scriptures abundantly prove that all men are sinners, and in an unreconciled state, considered under the law, or in the earthly nature, will not be disputed by any. Then it is certainly man that needs reconciliation. Men, while dictated by a carnal mind, are dissatisfied with God; they accuse him of being a hard master, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed. They think on the Almighty, but desire not the knowledge of his ways. They behold no beauty in him; he appears as a tyrant, regardless of his creatures. A consciousness of sin, without the knowledge of God, represents Deity as angry, and full of vengeance; in which sense, many Scriptures are written, as I have before observed. How often do we find that God has been provoked to wrath and jealousy, and his fury raised to a flame against the sinner? And how often do the Scriptures represent him repenting of his anger, and growing calm! All these Scriptures are written according to the circumstance of the creature, and the apprehensions which the unreconciled entertain of God. Viewing man in this state of unreconciliation to God and holiness, it appears evidently necessary that he should receive an atonement productive of a renewal of love to his Maker. Without atonement, God could never be seen

as he is, "altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand;" nor could he be loved with the whole heart, mind, might and strength. How often are men grumbling at Providence, that things should be governed as they are? How often are men displeased at the Supreme Being himself? What an infinite number of hard speeches have sinners spoken against God? All which argue the necessity of atonement, whereby those maladies may be healed.

What an infinite difference there is between the All-gracious and Merciful, and his lost and bewildered creatures? He, all glorious, without a spot in the whole infinitude of his nature; all lovely, without exception, and loving, without partiality. Who can tell the thousandth part of his love to his offspring? And this invariably the same through every dispensation, without the smallest abatement. But what can we say of man? Lost in the wilderness of sin, wandering in the by-paths of iniquity, lost to the knowledge of his heavenly Benefactor, and dissatisfied with his God; he goes on grumbling and complaining, attributing the worst of characters to the most merciful, and entertaining no regard for the fountain of all his comforts. God never called for a sacrifice to reconcile himself to man; but loved man so infinitely, that he was pleased to bruise his Son for our good, to give him to die, in attestation of love to sinners.

The belief that the great Jehovah was offended with his creatures to that degree, that nothing but the death of Christ, or the endless misery of mankind, could appease his anger, is an idea that has done more

injury to the Christian religion than the writings of all its opposers, for many centuries. The error has been fatal to the life and spirit of the religion of Christ in our world; all those principles which are to be dreaded by men, have been believed to exist in God; and professors have been moulded into the image of their Deity, and become more cruel than the uncultivated savage! A persecuting inquisition is a lively representation of the God which professed Christians have believed in ever since the apostacy. It is every day's practice to represent the Almighty so offended with man, that he employs his infinite mind in devising unspeakable tortures, as retaliations on those with whom he is offended. Those ideas have so obscured the whole nature of God from us, that the capacious religion of the human mind has been darkened by the almost impenetrable cloud; even the tender charities of nature have been frozen with such tenets, and the natural friendship common to human society, has, in a thousand instances, been driven from the walks of man. But, says the reader, is it likely, that persecution ever rose from men's believing, that God was an enemy to wicked men? Undoubtedly; for, had all professors of Christianity believed that God had compassion on the ignorant and those who are out of the way, how could they have persecuted those whom they believed in error? But, with contrary views, those who professed to believe in Christ, who professed to be the real disciples of him who taught his disciples to love their enemies, have been the fomenters of persecution; they have persecuted even

unto death, those who could not believe all the absurdities in orthodox creeds. It may be asked, if those animosities did not arise from pride, ambition and carnal mindedness? I answer, yes; and so does the God in whom persecuting Christians believe, for they form a God altogether like unto themselves; therefore, while they vainly fancy they are in the service of the true God, they are following the dictates of pride and unlawful ambition, the natural production of a carnal mind; and atonement is the only remedy for the evil.

Men are dissatisfied with the Almighty and his providence; they are dissatisfied with, and are enemies of one another; whereas our true happiness consists in loving God, and our neighbors. Men in possession of vile appetites, pursue with greediness, their gratification; but still, they retain their wants, their souls are allied to heaven and holiness, and can never be happy without them. They are conscious of sin, and feel condemnation resting on their minds; they look forward to the awful scene of dissolution, and their souls start back with horror. Death is the king of terrors to the unreconciled; how awful are the thoughts of death to those whose hopes are only the feeble productions of their fears and wants, unsupported with divine evidence! Oh, how necessary is atoning grace, on such an occasion, whereby a divine confidence may be enjoyed; the value thereof cannot be estimated by earthly treasures; all the shining dust of India and the riches of the south are poverty when compared with the riches of a reconciled mind.

Without atonement, God's glorious design, in the everlasting welfare of his offspring, man, could never be effected; the ordination of an infinitely merciful God could never be carried into effect. The Almighty must not be deprived of the means of accomplishing his gracious designs. We read of his covenant with day and night, which cannot be broken; but it would be broken at once, should the causes cease that produce their changes. So of the covenant of eternal mercy, the testament of eternal life, it must be put in force by the death of the testator, and its life and immortal glory be brought to light through his resurrection. Let it be understood, that it is man who receives the atonement, who stands in need of reconciliation, who, being dissatisfied, needs satisfaction; and not place those imperfections and wants in him who is infinite in his fulness; and the doctrine of atonement may be sought for in the nature of things, and found to be rational to the understanding.

That man receives the atonement, was evidently the opinion of St. Paul (see Rom. v. 11). "And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Were there a single passage in the Scriptures that would reach half as far in proving that God received the atonement, as the one just quoted does to prove that man received it, the matter might be considered more disputable than it now is.

We read, that men are enemies to God, by wicked works, which teaches us that enmity is wickedness. Should we then dare to say, that God is our enemy?

It is wrong for us to be enemies even to those who injure us, much more to those who never had it in their power to do us any harm. I wish to ask, did any of God's creatures ever injure him? Surely not. Why then does he turn our enemy? He commands us to love our enemies, that we may be like him; but if he hate his enemies, we must hate ours if we would be like him. If he be not our enemy, he needs no atonement. But if men are enemies to God, they need an atonement to bring them to love him who loves them.

Here the reader will observe that we shun those difficulties which have represented the Gospel of Christ so inconsistent. We now view the Almighty the same, yesterday, to-day and forever; by no means changed in his disposition towards his creatures, but always designing and working all things, for their good. Here is no need of the self-contradictory notion of altering an unalterable being; of satisfying an infinite dissatisfaction; of reconciling a being who was never unreconciled; of producing love in love itself; of causing an eternal unchangeable friend to be friendly, or of offering a sacrifice to the eternal father of our spirits, to cause him to love and have mercy on his offspring.

How much more reasonable it is, to suppose ourselves in need of those alterations. But unhappily, men have looked at Deity through the medium of a carnal mind, and have formed all their evil tempers in Jehovah; like the deceived astronomer, who fancied he saw a monster in the sun, occasioned by a fly on his

glass. The creature being in the medium of sight, was supposed to be in the object beheld; and though it was small in itself, and would have appeared so, could it have been seen where it was; yet carrying it into the sun, it magnified to an enormous size. So it is with our vile and sinful passions, could we behold them in ourselves, and view them as they are, they would appear in their finite and limited sphere; but the moment we form those passions in Deity, they magnify to infinity. Let a council of astronomers be called, who are all deceived by the fly; let them consult on the bigness of the monster, calculate how long it has been growing, and how soon it may wholly absorb the sun; let them endeavor to account for its cause, and analyze its constitution, inform us of the degrees of heat its lungs sustain, and how many degrees hotter it is than iron can be heated in a furnace. But here is room for disagreement, which may give rise to great disputations. To one, it appears much larger than to another; they cannot judge alike, with regard to its age, nor how much larger it will grow; some are ready to dispute its being a living creature, fancying it may be an opaque body. They are all agreed that there is a phenomenon in the sun, but dispute, and even quarrel, about its peculiarities. What would become of all their calculations, the moment they should discover the fly? All would be gone, at once, and the sun would be relieved of the burden of so ponderous a monster.

How many various calculations have divines made, on the fury and wrath which they have discovered in

God How much they have preached and written, on the awful subject; and how many ways they have invented, to appease such wrath and vengeance! When we come to see the error, and find those principles in ourselves, all those notions vanish at once. The fly on the glass might easily have been removed, or destroyed; but had there been a monster in the sun, what calculations could mortals have made to remove it; enmity in man may be overcome with love; but, did it exist in God, it must be infinite and eternal.

To conclude, the supposition that Deity receives the atonement, or any possible advantage from the Gospel plan, whereby an alteration is effected in him for the better, amounts to the inexplicable absurdity of making omniscience more wise, omnipotence more powerful, justice more just; and of giving love the power of loving, of making mercy more merciful, truth more true, and goodness better; for these are the seven spirits of God, which are in all the earth, and they are without the shadow of turning.

Having shown, as I hope, to the reader's satisfaction, the necessity of atonement, and where satisfaction must be made and reconciliation take place, I shall pass to make some inquiries into the personage of the Mediator who makes the atonement, and his ability for performing the work.

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER OF THE MEDIATOR.

I HAVE already stated some of the absurdities contained in the opinions of most Christians respecting the Mediator; I shall now be a little more particular on the subject.

I shall contend, that the Mediator is a created dependent being. That he is a created being, is proved from Rev. iii. 14, where he is said to be "the beginning of the creation of God." His dependency is proved by his frequent prayers to the Father. That he acknowledged a superior, when on earth, is evident, from many passages which might be quoted. (See St. John v. 19). Christ here says, "The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do." He acknowledged a superior in knowledge (see Matt. xxiv. 36. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." This passage implies that he did not know of that day himself. St. Mark is still more explicit (see chap. xiii. 32). "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." And further, that he acknowledges a superior, even in his risen glory, may be proved from his own words to his servant John, on the Isle of Patmos (see Rev. iii. 12). "Him that overcometh,

will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name." Four times, in the above passage, he acknowledges a being whom he worships. Again (see Psalm xlv. 7), "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness, because God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The reader will observe, I have ventured to put the word because, in room of the word therefore, in this quotation; but I have not done it without the authority of a former translation. The difference is so essential, I cannot dispense with it. Observe, the writer of the Psalm addresses one God, and speaks, in his address, of another (see verse 6), "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." This God is dependent on another, expressed in the 7th verse, "Because God, thy God hath anointed thee," etc. That the names, God, Lord, and everlasting Father, are applied to Christ, I shall not dispute; neither shall I dispute the propriety of it; but I do not admit, that they mean the self-existent Jehovah when applied to the Mediator. In the quotation from the Psalm, Christ is said to be anointed above his fellows. Fellows are equals. Who are Christ's equals? Perhaps the reader may say they are the Father and the Holy Spirit; but I can hardly believe that Christ was anointed with the oil of gladness above his Father, neither do I believe any one will contend for it. I am sensible, that God speaks, by

the prophet, of smiting the man who is his fellow; but this fellowship must be different from the one just spoken of, and stands only in an official sense. The reader will then ask, if I would consider the Mediator no more than equal with men? I answer, yes, were it not that our Father and his Father, our God and his God, hath anointed him above his fellows. (See Phil. ii. 9). "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." For this exaltation and name, he was dependent on his Father, and received them from him. This name, which is above every name, is the name of God, named on Jesus. It will be said, Christ taught the people that he and his Father were one. I grant he did, and if that prove him to be essentially God, the argument must run farther than the objector would wish to have it. (See St. John xvii. 11.) Christ prays that his disciples may be one, even as he and the Father are one. The oneness of the Father and Son, is their union and agreement in the great work which he has undertaken; and he prayed that his disciples might be as well agreed in the Gospel of salvation, as he and his Father were. (See verse 18.) "As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world." The Father of all mercies sent his Son Jesus into the world, for a certain purpose; and there was a perfect agreement between them in all things. He says he came not to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him. And again, "My meat and my drink is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

The President of the United States sends a minister to negotiate a peace at a foreign court; this minister must conduct according to the authority which he derives from him, by whom he is sent; and as far as he does, he is, in his official character, the power that sent him. It is evident, Christ received the power which he exercises in the work which he hath undertaken, and that his kingdom was given to him, which goes to prove he did not eternally possess them. (See Dan. vii. 14.) "And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom." According to the prophecy here quoted, the dominion, glory and kingdom of Christ were given him. The people whom he is to rule are given him. (See Psalm ii. 8.) "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.) Jesus saith, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth." (Chap. xi. 27.) "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." These and many more passages are found in sacred writ, in support of the dependence of the Mediator on the Supreme Eternal, and that he derives his power and glory from him. But if Christ be essentially God, all those Scriptures seem without just signification.

Christ is said to be the "image of the invisible God, and the first-born of every creature." His being the first-born of every creature, agrees with his being the beginning of the creation of God. It is plain to me, from Scripture, that the Mediator is the first human soul which was created, as Adam was the first man

that was formed; and that he is, in spirit, the Father of every human creature, as much as Adam is in the flesh. Therefore, Christ saith, as it is written, "Behold I and the children that thou hast given me."

It is written, that man was created in the image of God; and, by the light of the Gospel, St. Paul ventured to assert that Christ was this image. The reader will do well to observe, that the image of a person, and the person, are not essentially one, but some knowledge of a person may be obtained by his true image. Christ being the image of God, it is by him we learn the nature of the Father. Christ saith, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son revealeth him." Again, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." St. Paul is particular, on this subject, in his 1st Epistle to Timothy (see chap. ii. verse 5). "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." It seems, by this testimony, that St. Paul was a stranger to the notion of Christ's being essentially God, as it would be improper to call him a man, were that the case. If it be argued, that Christ is God and man both, I ask, was it the whole divine nature which constituted the divinity of Christ? If this question be answered in the affirmative, I desire to know where that divinity is which constitutes the other two persons in the Godhead. If the question be answered in the negative, and it be argued that the divinity which Christ possessed was an emanation from Jehovah, it is coming directly to what I contend for, viz., that he is a created being.

As we have seen, from the prophecy of Daniel, that Christ received his kingdom; so we are taught, by St. Paul, that he will deliver up his kingdom to the Father, when he has accomplished the grand object of his reign. (See 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.) "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Enough perhaps is written on this part of my query to make the matter plain to the reader, although much more might be quoted from the Scriptures in support of what I have argued.

I next inquire, has the Mediator power or ability to perform the great work of atonement, which is the reconciliation of the world to God? Those Scriptures, with their connections, which I have quoted to prove the Mediator's dependence, abundantly prove the sufficiency of his power to accomplish the work in which he is engaged. If all power in heaven and earth be committed to Christ, no doubt can be entertained of its efficiency. If the whole system of law in moral nature be subservient to the designs of the

Redeemer, and if he hold in his hands the power of moral government, it certainly must be at his option whether men shall be reconciled to God or not.

It may not be amiss to inquire, in this place, whether men, in their individual capacity, have the power of moral government. If they have, the great work of reconciliation might be performed by them, which would render the mission of Christ unnecessary. We ought not to suppose the Almighty ever purposed more than one way to produce the same event; if he have given ability to each individual to effect a complete reconciliation in himself, it is not consistent to believe that this work of reconciliation will be done by a Mediator; but if the work of reconciling all things to God be consigned to Christ, it is not reasonable to believe we have power to perform it ourselves. And I think it will not be deemed admissible that we have power to hinder this work of reconciliation, as that would, in effect, deny the truth of all power being given to Christ. We ought to consider that Christ was by no means ignorant of man; that he needed none to testify of man, as he knew what was in man. He knew the moral distance which man had wandered from God; he knew all the expense of recovering him to holiness and happiness; and it appears rational that he knew whether he possessed ability to defray this expense or not; and if he knew he did not possess this ability, he would not have undertaken it. We ought not to suppose the Mediator would act as unwisely as a man who undertakes to build a large house, without first counting the cost, to know if he

be able to finish a building so expensive; or as a king would do who should make war on another king, without first consulting whether he were able to contend with the double numbers which his adversary commanded.

St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, saith of Christ, he is the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell; and that the Father had made peace, through the blood of his cross; and then informs them for what this peace was made. See chap. i. verse 20: "By him to reconcile all things unto himself: by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." In Isa. ix. 6, we have a beautiful prophetic testimony of the power and kingdom of the Saviour. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And in the beginning of the next verse, the extent of his dominion is spoken of. "And of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end." There is a great number of like passages which in the course of this work I shall have occasion to introduce; but enough is already quoted to show for what this power is given to Christ, and that it is sufficient to accomplish the end intended. Again, it may be reasonable to argue that if the Almighty committed power into the hands of Christ, for the performance of anything whatever, if there should be found at last a want of power for

the work intended, it would prove a want of wisdom in the giver of such power. No one who professes to believe at all in Christ will dispute his power for the performance of all his will. But I wish to have the reader satisfied in respect to this power, and in what it consists, which, to make as clear as possible, I connect with my last particular in this general inquiry, which is atonement in its nature.

CHAPTER IV.

NATURE OF ATONEMENT.

I HAVE already observed that atonement and reconciliation are the same. Reconciliation is a renewal of love, and love is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, of which St. Paul speaks in Rom. viii. 2, by which he was made free from the law of sin. The soul, when governed by the law of sin which is in the members, of which St. Paul speaks in Rom. vii. 23, is in a state of unreconciliation to the law of the Spirit. And it is by the force and power of the law of love in Christ that the soul is delivered from the government of the law of sin; the process of this deliverance is the work of atonement, or reconciliation.

The reader will now see with ease that that power which causes us to hate sin and love holiness is the power of Christ, whereby atonement is made. All the law and the prophets rested on this spirit of love, by which alone they can be fulfilled. This eternal spirit of love is the word, or logos, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, which was hidden behind the letter of the law, and in the cabalistic allegories of the prophets, until it brake forth in the official character of Jesus, and rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom. Our Saviour, in his official character, is always called by the name or names

which is or are applicable to God manifest in the flesh, which figuratively means the letter of the law; this circumstance will fully account for all the Scriptures which my opponent would urge in support of Jesus' being essentially God.

Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them; the law is as far fulfilled in the soul as it is brought to love God, in his adorable image, Jesus; and a complete fulfilment of the law and the prophets will effect love in every soul on whom the law, in a moral sense, is binding.

Let it be asked, by what means are we brought to love God? Answer: "We love him because he first loved us." God's love to us is antecedent to our love to him, which refutes the notion of God's receiving the atonement; but the idea that the manifestation of God's love to us causes us to love him, and brings us to a renewal of love (in which spirit we all stood, in our spiritual head, Jesus, before formation; and from which we in a certain sense elapsed after being made subject to vanity), is perfectly consonant to the necessity of atonement, it shows us what atonement is, and the power which the Mediator must have and exercise in order to reconcile all things to God.

The method by which we are brought to love any object whatever is by seeing, or thinking we see, some beauty in the object; and our love is always in proportion to the apparent good qualities of the object seen.

While our minds are darkened by the veil on the heart in reading of Moses, so that the beauties of the

ministration of life are hidden from our eyes, and its excellent glories are out of our sight, it is impossible that we should love Christ or his word. Yet during this darkness we must love something; therefore, as sin and the vanities of elementary life present the greatest beauty to our eyes of any objects which we behold, our affections are placed on those corruptible things.

Now I call up the question again, has Jesus power to cause us to love holiness, and to hate sin? Answer: yes, if he have power to reveal the divine beauties of the word; to remove the letter and its administration, which are death, to take the veil from the heart, and to cause us to see himself altogether lovely.

When a sinner views God as an enemy, and grumbles concerning his being hard and austere; when he feels an aversion to him, and wishes to avoid his presence, it is certain the Son hath not revealed the Father to that soul. The ideas thus entertained of God are altogether wrong, and the mind that entertains them has no just conceptions of the Almighty. But blessed be the express image of the Invisible; he hath power to reveal the true character of the Father, to remove the veil from the heart, and to let the sunbeams of divine light gently into the understanding; then God appears altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand, while the soul in ecstasy embraces the brightness of his glory, crying, "My Lord and my God." But the idea of the letter is so fixed in the minds of Christian people in general, that the veil of

the law is as fully on their minds as it was on the Pharisees of old, which caused them to be blind to their Messiah when he came.

Christians have for a long time believed that the temporal death of Christ made an atonement for sin, and that the literal blood of the man who was crucified has efficacy to cleanse from guilt; but surely this is carnality and carnal-mindedness, if I have any knowledge of the apostle's meaning, where he says, "To be carnally-minded is death." The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. The apostles were made able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit. Christ saith, "Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." Must we understand this in a literal sense? If we do, how shall we understand what he further says of this matter?—"The flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak, they are spirit and they are life."

The apostasy of the Jews happened in consequence of the lips of the priests not preserving knowledge; they fell from the spirit of the law, were lost in the wilderness of the letter, and therefore were blinded indeed. This was a figure of the more dreadful apostasy of Christians, as were various other circumstances recorded in the Old Testament. The Christian apostasy happened in the same way; and the church has been led into the wilderness of the letter by an hireling priesthood, who knew nothing of the spirit of the law; who have preached, in the name of the Lord, the letter, which killeth, in room of the spirit, which giveth life."

The literal death of the man, Christ Jesus, is figurative; and all the life we obtain by it, is, by learning what is represented. The literal body of Jesus represented the whole letter of the law, with all the allegories contained in the word of prophecy. The death of the body of Jesus represented the death and destruction of the letter, when the spirit comes forth, bursting the veil thereof, which is represented by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Agreeably to this, the reader will understand all the sacrifices, under the law, by which the High Priests entered within the veil.

Being thus enabled to pass from the letter to the spirit, we see what death it is, which is the proper sacrifice for sin, and what blood it is that cleanses from guilt. The blood is said to be the life, it is therefore the spirit or life of the law which does away sin, and gives life to the soul.

I am sensible there are thousands who profess Christianity, who are blind enough to object and say, "Then the Gospel has nothing to do in the salvation of mankind." But suffer me to say the Gospel is nothing but the spirit of the law, which is the word, or logos, spoken in the law, brought forth from the shadows of the first dispensation. To believe in any other atonement than the putting off of the old man, with his deeds, and the putting on of the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, is carnal-mindedness, and is death.

There is nothing in heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, that can do away sin, but love; and we have

reason to be eternally thankful that love is stronger than death, that many waters cannot quench it, nor the floods drown it; that it hath power to remove the moral maladies of mankind, and to make us free from the law of sin and death, to reconcile us to God, and to wash us pure in the blood, or life, of the everlasting covenant. Oh, love, thou great physician of souls, what a work hast thou undertaken! All souls are thy patients; prosperous be thy labors, thou bruiser of the head of carnal mind.

In this view of the subject, we may see how the divine grace of reconciliation may be communicated to those who have never been privileged with the volume of divine revelation, and who have never heard the name of a Mediator proclaimed, as the only way of life and salvation. I have no doubt but thousands, whose education has taught them to look on the Christian religion as an imposture, may possess a good degree of this love, which is the spirit of life in Christ Jesus; and though none can feel or experience this divine animation, only through the medium of the second Adam, I do not conceive that its agency is confined particularly to names, sects, denominations, people or kingdoms.

The word, which is nigh us, even in our hearts and mouths, is everywhere, operating, in some degree, in all hearts. The enmity, which God put between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, is every where felt, and the two children are struggling in every breast. When the creature-like nature, or the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, leads

the whole man captive, it is then that the soul is in a state of unreconciliation and death; but when the heavenly child, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, binds the strong man armed, and whispers heavenly invitations to the soul, revealing himself in the understanding, the soul immediately ceases to confer with flesh and blood, beholds with inexpressible admiration the heavenly beauties of the new nature, is moulded into its likeness, and experimentally becomes a child of God; the flaming sword is removed from the place of light; the way to the tree of life is opened, and the soul enters by the anchor of hope within the veil, where the cherubims are disarmed of the flaming sword, and stand looking down on the mercy seat, where God communes with his people. Thus, by the spirit of the word, the soul is brought to a sweet communion with God, it feels its eternal sonship, and rejoices therein, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Perhaps the Christian reader will here pause, and say, my soul can witness that what the author writes is true; but then he does not tell of a regular law work; without which the soul can never be brought to taste those delicacies in the Gospel provisions. To this observation, I reply, I believe there are as egregious errors crept into the Christian church, in this particular, as in anything relative to the Christian religion; and I further believe, that, among those who have really tasted that the Lord is gracious, there are such differences on the above point, that, in many instances, they amount to a disfellowship, and tend

greatly to destroy the blessed work begun in the soul. But those errors undoubtedly originate in some theories which are produced by the wisdom of the carnal mind, which is so opposed to the wisdom from above, that it is always endeavoring to introduce something that may serve to raise animosities, and to sow discord among brethren.

Some, who, by the force of a false education, have been led to believe that God is an enemy to the sinner, have supposed they were every day exposed to the just vengeance of the Almighty, and have fancied that they could clearly see the justice of God in their eternal banishment from heaven and happiness; and they have been so wrecked on this wheel of torture, as to be deprived of sleep and every kind of repose, for a tedious time, some longer and some shorter. Awful dreams, fraught with the most terrifying imaginations, have corroded the mind; and sometimes, a burning lake of fire and brimstone has been painted to the mind so clearly, that, for several days together, the poor frightened soul would feel as if it were on the brink of a precipice, expecting the next moment to be the fatal one. In this awful situation, it pleases God to manifest himself to the soul; and in a moment, all those frightful imaginations are dispersed, and an universal calm takes possession of the whole region of the mind. The soul now rejoices, as a captive set at liberty, or a pardoned criminal; and there is nothing to be heard from him but the praises of his benefactor. In this hour of joy, should he hear ten thousand singing praises to his Redeemer, he would not wish to

stop them, to know whether they had all felt just as he had, before he knew the truth. But, in a short time, carnal mind, still alive in the members, begins to make its intrusions, and in a very deceitful way. It pretends to wish to help the soul along in religion, and says, there must be a close examination, it will not do to harbor errors, etc. But, in room of setting the creature to examine himself, it sets him to examine his brother; his brother happens to be one who, in fact, loves Christ and his word, and, to all appearance, walks in the path of obedience; but, he is one whose education was not quite so perverse as was his, and one who was taught that God is an enemy to sin, not to sinners; that he will chastise for iniquity, but that God is not so incensed as some imagine. This brother cannot tell all that his interrogator has experienced, and is, therefore, rejected, for not telling a good law work.

It is now possible that the reader is more surprised than before, and will say the author does not talk like a Christian; and, feeling some disagreeable emotion, he thinks he will read no further. But stop, dear sir; that determination may arise wholly from a want of divine charity. If you are, in reality, a Christian, and stand in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, what you here read will do you no harm.

I am now about to examine your law work, as you call it, and shall argue, that what you call law is only a creature of false education.

Before you found peace, you thought you could see the justice of God in your eternal exclusion from heaven and happiness. Now I ask, can you find, that

God ever gave a law to man which required endless misery, in case of disobedience? Sure I am, the Scriptures speak of none, neither do the dictates of good reason admit of its existence. Perhaps my opponent may say, we are not to use our reason in matters of religion. I answer, if we are not to understand the things of God, by Scripture and reason, I am at a loss to know how to come at them. I have before argued this point particularly, in order to show, that such a penalty does not exist in the law of God. Did you think an exclusion from heaven and happiness would be an exclusion from holiness and righteousness? Did you ever see the justice of God in your being sinful, unholy and impure? You answer, no. Then you never saw the justice of God in your endless exclusion from heaven and happiness.

A false education has riveted the error in the minds of thousands that God's law required endless misery to be inflicted on the sinner. How often do professed Christians address the Almighty, and say, "Hadst thou been just to have marked iniquity, we should, long since, have been in the grave with the dead, and in hell with the damned." This address amounts to nothing more or less than a complimental accusation against God for injustice! It surprises me to think how professed Christians will contend for the honor and glory of God in a way that renders his character infinitely inglorious and dishonorable.

Further, you believed (you say) before you were a believer in the truth, that you stood in danger, every moment, of falling into endless misery, I would ask,

if that were true, which you believed, before you believed the truth? I further ask, are you now exposed to those dreadful torments? You will say, you hope for the better. And what is it that now preserves you from such danger? You confess it is your Saviour. But was it not he who preserved you before your conversion? And are you more safe in his hands at one time than at another?

Some have gone so far, in their law work, as to say, they saw the justice of God so plainly, and it appeared so beautiful that they were perfectly willing to be endlessly miserable, according to its requirements. Such Christians will not allow that a person can be savingly converted without being first willing to be endlessly miserable. This, I must confess, is a law work as unreconcilable to Scripture and reason as it is corrosive to the mind. The amount of it is this, I see so much beauty and divine excellency in the justice of God that I am perfectly willing to exist, to all eternity, in rebellion against it! I wish to know what the soul has to be thankful for in the work of salvation? If it be brought to be willing to be endlessly miserable, it cannot be thankful for the gift of eternal life. Again, if a willingness to be damned is a good situation, the soul ought to continue in it; and then hell and endless woe would be as valuable a prize for which to run, in the Christian race, as heaven and immortality.

It is generally believed, the Saviour strives, by his Spirit, to bring the creature into a state of grace and salvation; and that the devil strives, with all his wily

arts, to get the soul into hell and endless torments. Now, if these things be so, to which is the soul reconciled, when it is willing to be endlessly miserable? That multitudes have been in great fear of being rejected by the Almighty, at last, I have no doubt; for I confess those torments have been mine in no small degree. But I contend, it is impossible for any one to be willing to be endlessly miserable. Happiness always was, and always will be, the grand object of all rational beings; and to reverse this object would be to reverse man from a reasonable to an unreasonable creature.

The above notion of law work has been the awful mean of driving multitudes of blinded mortals into as much despair as the mind is capable of. Honest-hearted persons, who do not wish to be deceived, or deceive others, knowing that they never felt willing to be damned, and being told they must be willing in order to be saved, have supposed that God had already reprobated their fearful souls to endless ruin! Others have been so deceived, as to think they had better be willing to be damned than not to be saved; desiring salvation so much, they think they had better be willing to be shut out of heaven forever, than to miss of salvation, and have, either honestly or hypocritically, said they were willing to be damned; expecting great favors, in consequence of the confession. The moment we have a just idea of the spirit of the law making an atonement for sin, all those absurdities and contradictions are removed, and their causes taken away.

I doubt not but God communicates his grace to persons laboring under every kind of deception; and in respect to that grace, no dispute arises among believers. Their disputes arise from notions which they entertained before they were enlightened, or from certain inventions of their own afterwards which do not arise from the spirit of truth.

The divine efficacy of this atoning grace may be communicated to the most vile and profligate person in the world, and stop him in his full career of wickedness; it can show the sinner, in a moment, the deformity of sin, and the beauty of holiness. In other instances the morally virtuous are led a long time in concern and great trouble about themselves before they find him of whom Moses and the prophets did write.

God is not confined to character, time or place, to work the work of atonement in the soul; he does all things well, and in the best time and way; and Christians do very wrong to contend about those differences which sin and deception caused in them before they knew Christ.

Two persons are discoursing about the agreeable flavor of the pine-apple; one says to the other, it tastes very differently from what I expected it would before I tasted it; I thought it was a crabbed sour. Says the other, I am sure you never tasted of a pine-apple; for, before I tasted one, I thought it was a disagreeable bitter. Thus they dispute, each in his turn arguing that the other had never tasted of the fruit because they had different ideas about it before they actually had any knowledge of it.

Would you not, kind reader, advise those disputants to come to a solution of their question in a different way? Surely you would; and if they could agree about the real taste of the apple, you would advise them to let their former false notions alone.

Then, Christian reader, go and do likewise in the religion of Jesus; and wherever you find a brother who has in reality tasted that the Lord is gracious, fellowship him as one initiated into the kingdom of God.

Atonement by Christ was never intended to perform impossibilities; therefore it was never designed to make men agree and live in peace while they are destitute of love one to another; but it is calculated and designed to inspire the mind with that true love which will produce peace in Jesus. As atonement is a complete fulfilment of the law of the heavenly man, it causes its recipient to love God and his fellow-creatures in as great degree as he partakes of its nature. Ask one brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, how God appears to him; and he will answer, more glorious than he can describe. Ask him how he feels towards his fellow-men; and he will say, even of his enemies, he wishes them no worse than to enjoy the blessings of divine favor. In times of refreshing, how many thousands have been heard to speak of the goodness of the Lord, and of the infinite fulness of his grace; and with what love, affection and fervency have they invited their fellow-men to the rich provisions of the Gospel!

The earth, in time of drought, ceases to be fruitful;

the streams and springs thereof are dried up; the fields put off their robes of green, and gardens afford no fragrant delights; but when the heavens give the wonted blessing in gentle showers, how suddenly is the face of nature changed! The purling rill murmurs through the mead, pastures and fields teem with vegetation, and gardens blush with enamelled beauties. So the soul, unwatered with the rain of righteousness, and destitute of the waters of eternal life, is like a barren fig-tree that yields no wholesome fruit. But behold the transition; the moment atoning grace is effective in the mind, the parched ground becomes a pool, and the thirsty land streams of water. The soul is like the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom they are dressed; and, like a garden well watered and cultivated, yielding all manner of precious fruits. Look on the trees, after autumn has plucked their leaves, and winter frozen their trunks and limbs. Without faith in spring, their future life would be hopeless; but wait for the season of nature's appointment, when the increasing majesty of the sunbeams gently removes the chains of frost, and warm zephyrs are breathed on the surrounding snow, removing it from the land; the embryo blossom, nicely concealed in frost, now swells with genial heat; and the leaf, so nicely folded in winter's chest, now displays its matchless green, and the whole forest rejoices in expanded delights. So, if we look on man, in the sinful Adam, there is no appearance of heavenly life, or divine animation; the soul is bound in the fetters

of sin, frozen with covetousness, and apparently dead in the winter of iniquity. But behold the Sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings, removing sin, by the power of grace, and killing moral death, with divine life and animation, and causing the soul to rejoice in the kingdom of grace and glory. Then it may be rightly said, "The winter is past, the rains are over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of singing is come." How mysterious are the ways of God! What infinite depths of wisdom lie concealed from the sight of mortals! He who varies the seasons of the year, and diversifies nature through so great a number of changes, without losing the smallest particle of matter, can carry his rational creatures through all the dispensations designed in infinite wisdom, without losing any, and consummate the whole glory at last.

Suffer me, kind reader, in my faithfulness with the saints, to excite a close examination. It can be of no avail to believe we are partakers of atoning grace unless that is really the case. I am of opinion that many may be deceived in these things; some may suppose they are experimentally acquainted with them, when in reality they have no other evidence of it than that some godly minister, as they suppose him to be, can fellowship them as Christians; while others do, in reality, feel this divine spirit of grace in its atoning operations, but dare not suffer themselves to believe it, because they have not obtained the approbation of some in whom they have been taught to put confidence.

I would, therefore, note some faithful evidences in this case which will not deceive us; and in doing this I shall keep the reader close to the spirit of the law, which is love to God and man. From these two points and their consequences, all the evidence which can be obtained must be deduced. The question then is, do you love God? If you answer yes, I ask, why do you love him? and why do you endeavor to serve him? If you answer, because it is your duty, and you fear his rod if you do not; I tell you you are deceived; you have no real love to your Maker. Undoubtedly you would say (as many vain professors have said), "If you were certain of salvation in the world to come, you would do all the mischief here you could." If the Gospel of Jesus Christ have any enemies in this wicked world, you are of that class. Your profession of Christianity for forty or fifty years; your attention to Church ordinances, and the mighty parade you have made in a round of (what you call) religious duties, have only served to paint you like a whited sepulchre. You lack the one thing needful, which is love. You are ready to oppose all professors of Christianity who do not subscribe to your articles of faith. The weapons of your warfare are a tongue of slander, and a spirit of persecution; and you are daily raising false accusations against those who faithfully serve the Lord in spirit and in truth. The Pharisees of old made as great professions of religion as you do, and were as punctual to those customs whereby they made void the law as you are to those whereby you make void the Gospel; and like you

they were zealous of defending their religion; and in their zeal they murdered the Lord of life and glory! Perhaps you will say the author is hard in his reproofs. I reply, if you, who answer the questions as I have stated, are not of the class of which I speak, you will not feel the rebuke; but if you are, you not only deserve it, but greatly need it. On the other hand, if you can truly say, you love the Lord on account of the divine beauties and excellencies you behold in him; that he is in truth, to you, altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand; that you delight in his service, because it is your meat and drink to do his will; that your greatest enjoyment is obedience to his commands, which are joyous and not grievous, and in keeping of which there is great reward; let your denomination be what it may, let you live in what part of the world you will, you are a friend to the religion of Jesus, and you have sweet communion with him who sits at the right hand of God. Are you rich in the things of this world; you view all your possessions at the will, and you wish to have them at the disposal of the Master whom you serve; are you adorned with titles of human honor, how sweet is it to lay all these things at the feet of him whom you esteem infinitely honorable. Are you poor in the goods of fortune, you possess the true riches; are you a disconsolate widow, behold God is your husband, and the father of your fatherless children.

Atoning grace produces all which the Bible means by conversion, or being born of the Spirit; it brings

the mind from under the power and constitution of the earthly Adam, to live by faith on the Son of God, and to be ruled and governed, even in this life, in a great measure, by the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus. It opens eternal things to our view and contemplation; it brings heaven into the soul, and clothes the man in his right mind; it inspires the soul with divine meekness and boldness at the same time. It was this that enabled the apostle of our Lord to preach the Gospel, in defiance of the rage of their enemies, and gave them immortal consolations in their sufferings for the cause of truth. It causes the Christian to love all God's rational creatures, and to wish their saving knowledge of the truth; it produces good works in their purity, and all the morality worth the name is founded on it. Its divine power is stronger than any possible opposition, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it; it opens a door of everlasting hope, and conducts the soul, by the way of the cross, to immortality and eternal life. This dispensation of atonement is manifested through Christ, for the reconciliation of all things to God, in his glorious kingdom of holiness and happiness.

In this general view of atonement, I come to my last inquiry proposed in this treatise, namely, the consequences of atonement to mankind.

Part III.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ATONEMENT TO MANKIND.

CHAPTER I.

THEIR UNIVERSALITY.

In this last inquiry, I must be a little more lengthy than in either of the former, but I hope not to be too tedious. What I shall contend for, as the consequences of atonement, is the universal holiness and happiness of mankind, in the final issue of the Redeemer's process. In doing this I will —

First. Make a fair statement of the doctrine of universal salvation, as I understand it.

Secondly. Take notice of the most frequent objections stated against the doctrine by various denominations. And

Lastly. Give my reasons for believing in my general proposition from Scripture and reason.

I will make the statement of the doctrine which I believe, as short as possible.

1st. God created man in Christ the Mediator; in which creation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, of which St. Paul speaks to the Romans, was the whole governing principle of his nature.

2d. After the creation of man in this divine constitution, it pleased the Almighty to reduce him to a state of formation in flesh and blood; in which constitution, the law of sin, which St. Paul said he found in his members, became the governing principle of the whole man.

3d. God has revealed his divine and glorious purpose of bringing man back from his formed state, and from under the law of the earthly Adam, to his original created state, forever to be under the governing power of the law of the heavenly constitution.

The objections, of which notice will be taken, stand opposed to my third proposition. The first that I notice is found in a proposition frequently stated by modern divines, thus, "God, in the great and infinite plan of moral government, consults the greatest possible good to the whole system; and in order for the greatest possible happiness to be produced, it was necessary that some of God's rational creatures should be eternally miserable. Agreeable to which all men cannot be saved." This is the only ground on which an objection can be stated against universal holiness and happiness, while we admit the existence of an Infinite Supreme.

I cannot go into an examination of any authorities on which the above statement is supposed to stand; for I know of none. All I can do is to examine the statement itself. It is argued, agreeably to this proposition, that the infinite and inconceivable miseries of the wicked, in the world to come, will enhance the happiness of the glorified in heaven.

Against these statements I argue, if, in order for the greatest possible happiness to exist, the greatest possible misery must also exist, I wish to reverse the subject. Then the proposition would stand thus, in order for the greatest possible evil to exist the greatest possible good must exist. Then, if God, in his universal plan, has produced as much good as was possible, he has also produced as much evil as possible, which renders the statement, that he consulted the greatest possible evil, as just, as that he consulted the greatest possible good. Of course, there is no more propriety in calling him good, than there is in calling him bad!

If it be said I carry this evil, or misery, too far, even beyond my opponent's meaning, I will endeavor to show him, according to his own statement, that I do not. He says, every degree of misery in hell will produce many degrees of happiness in heaven; if so, if the wretched be not made as miserable as possible, the blessed cannot be made as happy as possible; if they are not made as happy as possible, they must experience some want; and, of course, some misery themselves. On the other hand, if the wretched be not as miserable as possible, they must have in possession some remaining convenience. Then, neither the greatest possible happiness, nor the greatest possible misery is produced.

Almighty God, being put to the necessity of making some of his rational offspring eternally miserable in order to make the rest forever happy, may be represented by a parent who has ten children, but only

provisions enough to preserve the lives of five until he could get more. In this awful dilemma he sits down to consult the greatest possible good; says to himself, if I divide my provisions equally among my children, all must surely starve to death; but by neglecting five, I can save the lives of the other five, which he finally concludes to do. But I ask the rational, I petition the reasonable, I request the impartial, to guess the feelings of a father on such an occasion! Before him are ten children, all in the image of himself; he sees his own eyes roll in their heads, hears his own voice on their tongues, while his own blood frolics through their veins; how could he make the division? how could he decide on one for a victim? Would he not rather give his own flesh to be their meat, and his own blood to be their drink, and fervently pray for plenty? But is the Almighty poor? Has he not enough and to spare? When the prodigal came home, did the father turn away his brother so that he might have a plenty for him? Is there not fulness enough in God to satisfy the wants of all his creatures? Why the necessity, then, of making some miserable eternally? My opponent will say, the blessed are happified in consequence of the misery of the wretched. But what reason can be given for such an idea? How do we look on a person in this world who manifests joy and happiness in the misery of one of his fellow-creatures? Do we say he manifests a godlike disposition? Surely no. From whence came charity; from heaven, or hell? If souls in heaven possess it, they cannot be happy in conse-

quence of the misery of any rational being; and should the divine principle be found in hell, it would banish misery, and annihilate the place!

Again, if a soul in heaven derives happiness from seeing, say, one-half, or two-thirds, of the human race in misery, would he not yet enjoy more, providing the whole, except himself, were in the same torment? If it be granted that he would, then, in order for a soul to be made as happy as possible, the whole human race, except that one, must be endlessly as miserable as possible! If it be argued that it is not the number or multitudes of individuals who are made miserable that thus constitutes or enhances the happiness of the blessed, but that it is the nature, justice and intenseness of this misery which is necessary for the above purpose, it makes it very plain that the eternal misery of one would produce as much good as of ten thousand, or more.

We have now got so far, even on our opponent's ground, as to see that there is no need of more than one soul's being endlessly miserable; and it still further appears to me that the misery of one may be dispensed with without departing from what my opponent has acknowledged; and that by letting each individual of the human race for a moment, or any limited time, experience the nature of the misery contended for; and then giving them a memory to retain it fresh in mind forever; this must of necessity produce the effect as well, and without the expense of a single soul. I do not think it would absolutely require omniscient wisdom to concert a better plan than the one I am opposing.

Suppose we alter the circumstance of the father and his ten children: suppose the father has provisions enough for the whole, and his object in the bestowing of it upon them is to cause the greatest possible happiness among his children. Which way would good sense and parental affection choose, either to feed five to the full, and starve the rest to death, that their dying groans might give the others a better appetite and their food a good relish, or to let them all be hungry enough to relish their food well, and all alike partake of it?

I will take notice of a certain passage of Scripture in this place, which some have endeavored to accommodate to the argument which I am disputing. (See Rev. xiv. 10, 11.) "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." It is not because I am afraid of wounding this beast, or of affronting its rider, that I do not enter into a particular explanation of the passage recited; but because it deserves the labor of more time than I have now to spare. However, the idea of my opponent is easily refuted; and this is as much as the reader ought to expect in this work. The common idea is, that the punishment here spoken of is altogether in eternity, and not in

this world of mortality; that it being in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, it indicates that it affords pleasure in those heavenly mansions where they dwell.

First, I request the reader to observe that the verbs, ascendeth, have, worship, and receiveth, are all in the same tense, which at least favors the idea that the sulphurous smoke of this torment ascendeth up at the same time that the tormented worship the beast. If the apocalyptical beast be worshipped to an endless eternity, it follows that his worshippers will be tormented as long. Until it is proved that some will worship this beast in another world, or endlessly, it cannot be proved from this passage that any will be tormented in another world, or endlessly. It is said in the text that the worshippers of the beast have no rest day nor night. If it can be proved that day and night are reckoned in another world, or in eternity, my opponent has better ground for his argument than I think he has.

This beast, undoubtedly, is Antichrist; the worshippers of the beast are apostatized Christians of all denominations since the Christian apostacy. They have always been in wars and commotions, and have had no rest; and as for their being tormented, in all their public worship, with fire and brimstone, no argument is necessary to make it obvious.

Another objection, which has often been stated against the salvation of all men, stands in a pretended axiom, namely, "A God all mercy is a God unjust." The force of this pretended axiom, as used against the

salvation of all men, is, if God should do justly by all men, He would be an unmerciful being; or, if He should show mercy to all men, He would be an unjust being. There is nothing self-evident in this axiom that I can see but its own want of propriety; it represents justice and mercy at an eternal variance. According to this axiom, and the argument deducible from it, justice may be compared to a monstrous wolf in pursuit of a number of lambs, and mercy to a shepherd who is obliged to give up a large number of them, to gorge his omnivorous appetite, while he makes off with the rest.

I have already sufficiently refuted the idea of justice requiring the endless misery of the creature; and, until that notion can be supported by Scripture or reason, an objection against the salvation of all men cannot be stated, from the nature of justice. I have also showed that in order for justice to require the endless misery of any moral being, it must of necessity require the endless continuance of sin, than which nothing is more absurd. Again, it is objected, as many are going out of this world daily in a state of sinfulness and unreconciliation to God, and there being no alteration in the soul for the better after it leaves this natural life, millions must be miserable as long as God exists. The force of this objection stands on the supposition that there is no alteration for the better after death. Could this supposition be proved, I grant it would substantiate a formidable and (I think) an unanswerable objection against the final holiness and happiness of all men. I have often heard the

objection made, but never heard an evidence brought from Scripture or reason to support the declaration. Divines being sensible of the want of Scripture to support this (their) supposition, have, very liberally, been at the expense of making some; and the notable passage which they have coined and brought into very frequent use is not to be found in the Scriptures of the Old or New Testament; but is frequently to be heard from the pulpit, read in many of their writings, and recited by many of their adherents. It is as follows: "As the tree falls, so it lies; as death leaves us, so judgment will find us." I shall not contend about a different explanation of this addition to the Scriptures from the usual one; but will only say, if the thing which my opponents would prove by it be true, namely, that souls cannot be altered for the better after death, all our Christian people must remain eternally as unsanctified as they are in this world of infirmities.

Again, many contend that God deals with mankind as moral agents; that he sets life and death before us, and leaves us to make our own choice, and to fare accordingly. That, as our eternal state depends on what use we make of our agency, millions will prove rebellious, and, therefore, miss of salvation. But I query, if one soul can obtain salvation on the principle of moral agency, why another cannot as well? If it be granted he can, I ask, again, why all men cannot as well as any? If it be still granted, I say, as I have before said, that which can be done may be done; therefore the objection fails. But the objector will say it renders universal salvation uncertain; I answer,

no more than it renders universal damnation certain. All may be lost forever as well as one; therefore my opponent's hopes are subject to the same shipwreck to which he would expose mine. I would further inquire, if God deals with man upon a system of moral agency, is it God's revealed will that all men should be saved agreeably to their agency? If it be granted that it is, I further inquire, whether God's will in the moral agency of man will be eternally frustrated? If not, no objection stands against Universalism; but the proposition on which my opponent endeavors to substantiate an objection favors the doctrine as far as it goes.

In my observations on the liberty of will, I have given some of my ideas concerning agency as it is generally understood; but moral agency may be very differently understood by different persons. If by moral agency be meant an ability to love an object or objects which appear agreeable, I have no objections to make; but if it mean an ability to hate that which appears agreeable and to love that which appears disagreeable, I contend no such agency exists in any being within the compass of our knowledge. It is certainly reasonable to suppose that all the agency possessed by man was given him by his Maker; and that when God gave him this agency it was for a certain purpose, which purpose must finally be every way answered, providing God be infinitely wise. I cannot but think it incorrect to suppose that God ever gave any creature agency to perform what he never intended should be done. Then, if any soul be made

endlessly miserable by its agency, it follows that God gave that soul this agency for that unhappy purpose; and if any be saved by their agency, God gave them their agency for that blessed end. If any wish to make a different use of agency, let them state fairly that God gave man an agency intending man's eternal salvation thereby; but man makes a different use of his agency from what God intended, whereby the gracious designs of Deity are forever lost!

If my opponent will not fix his agency on some of the above noted principles as it respects the issue of the argument, I am sure he can do nothing with it to any effect. If agency be stated on the principle of God's intending the creature's salvation by it, and it be granted that his will in the affair will be done, it is an acknowledgment of the doctrine for which I contend. But if it be stated that although God gave man his agency, for the glorious purpose of his endless felicity, yet his purpose may fail. Could this statement be proved true, it would not only refute universal salvation, but everything else as being a divine system on which we may, with any confidence, depend.

CHAPTER II.

OBJECTIONS.

One of the objections on which the enemies of universal holiness and happiness put much dependence, and which they frequently urge against the doctrine, is stated from the force of unlimited words, as they find a few of them in Scripture applied to the misery of the wicked. The force of this objection I remove by proving that unlimited words are applied to things and events which are not strictly eternal or endless; and surely the candid reader will acknowledge this way of reasoning is just, and by no means evasive. I shall not labor this point largely, for it has been done faithfully by an able author whose works are among us. I will only introduce a few Scriptures, and make some observations on them for the benefit of those of my readers who have not seen the masterly work referred to. (See Gen. xvii. 7, 8.) "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Verse 13.) "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money,

must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." In the above passage the land of Canaan is called an everlasting possession. Will my opponent contend the word everlasting here means an endless duration? Will he contend that Abraham now possesses the land wherein he was then a stranger, or that his seed do, or will, possess that land as long as God exists? If not, then the objection is given up.

Again, the covenant of circumcision of the flesh is called an everlasting covenant. Will the objector contend that the covenant of circumcision in the flesh is now in force, and that it will remain in force as long as God exists? It is evident, from Scripture, that these ordinances and this covenant are removed, and succeeded by a covenant which is called a better one. (See Heb. viii. 6, 7, 8.) "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, but how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." (Chap. ix. 10.) The apostle argues that the ordinances of the first covenant were imposed on the people until the time of reformation. (Gen. xlviii. 3, 4.) "And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me; and said unto me, behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee,

and I will make thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession." And he further said, in the blessing of Joseph, "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills." (Exod. xl. 15.) "And thou shalt anoint them (Aaron's sons) as thou anointed their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations." Lev. xvi. 34.) "And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins once a year; and he did as the Lord commanded Moses." The reader may learn the abolishment of the priesthood, that is here called an everlasting priesthood, from Heb. vii. 11, 12. "If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." (Jonah ii. 6.) "I went down to the bottom of the mountain; the earth with her bars was about me forever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." Many more passages might be quoted to clear this point of argument, if more were necessary; but depending some, as I ought to, on the candor of my reader, I forbear to be tedious.

In the next place, I will take notice of a number

of Scriptures in connection, all of which have been erroneously applied to the future and endless misery of mankind. (See Mal. iv. 1.) "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, said the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." (Matt. iii. 10.) "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Verse 12.) "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." (Chap. v. 29, 30.) "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." (Chap. vii. 13, 14.) "Enter in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Chap. xiii. 30.) "Let both grow together until the time of harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say unto the reapers, gather ye together, first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." The whole of Chap. xxv., which is too lengthy to be written at large. The last paragraph of Luke xvi. (Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.) "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be

revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." There are a number more Scriptures of the like nature of the above quoted, to which I should be glad to attend, were it not for swelling this work too large. I will, however, after I have answered these in their order, take into consideration some others of a different kind. Those which I have quoted, mostly respect that dispensation which is represented by fire, which to illustrate more easily to the reader's understanding, I will first produce a passage from St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, iii. 15, which I will call my key text. "If any man's works shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." By my key, I learn that the fire which causes the wicked to suffer, has the power of salvation even for the sufferers. So in all the passages recited, where fire is mentioned, it is evident the same fire is intended. "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven." In this same chapter, this day is called the great and dreadful day of the Lord, who promised to send Elijah the prophet before that day come, whose business should be to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest the Lord should smite the earth with a curse.

I inquire, first, concerning the coming of this

prophet, in order to fix on a time for the commencement of this day of the Lord. That Elijah and Elias are the same, in Scripture, no doubt will be entertained. Then turn to Matt. xvii. 12, 13. "But I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed; likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." By this Scripture it appears that the promise of the coming of Elijah, the prophet, was fulfilled by the coming of John the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elias; which shows very clearly that the Gospel day, or coming of Messiah, was the day that should burn as an oven. The burning of an oven is used here as a metaphor to represent the power of Gospel light and love in the moral system. In the chapter preceding our text, Christ is prophesied of, as follows. (See verse 1, and so on.) Observe the forerunner is first spoken of, and then Christ himself. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." Thus far John the Baptist is intended. "And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like a fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering

in righteousness." The purpose intended by the fire of this day of the Lord is made very evident by the above quotation, which, with my key, will much assist us in understanding the metaphor before us. First, how does an oven burn? Answer, so as to consume the combustibles which are in it, by which the oven is prepared for the master's use, being perfectly cleansed, and of a right temperature to receive whatever the baker pleases to put into it. By this fire the sons of Levi were to be cleansed, so as to offer an offering in righteousness; and by this fire, the hay, wood and stubble, are burned; but the possessor of them, though he suffer loss, yet is saved by it. Here, we see, in room of the sinner's endless misery, his purification as a prerequisition for endless bliss and happiness. My opponent may urge that the text says, the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch; which hath respect to the sinner, and not to his sins. Be it so. But will the passage afford my opponent's inference, which is the endless duration of the sinner's misery? By no means; for that which is burnt up, root and branch, does no longer abide. To say of a tree that it was burnt up root and branch, would forbid the idea of its enduring the fire always. The total annihilation of the wicked is a thousand times more literally proved than his endless misery; and I may add, with propriety, that the very words which my opponent urges in support of endless misery, are sufficient proof against it. I argue that this particular

part of the text alludes to the total destruction of the sinner in respect to the nature of the earthly Adam; of which neither root nor branch will be left. This I conceive to be in reality what the text means; and I am perfectly willing to rest the correctness of my ideas on the experience of any vital lover of the religion of Christ. Call to mind, what a crackling of thorns, what a breaking up of the nether parts of thy soul, what a consumption seized every part, and what a sinking to nothing, when the word of God, the spirit of the law, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, pierced to the dividing of thy soul and spirit joints and marrow, and plainly discerned the thoughts and intents of thy heart, until thou found thyself on the rock of ages. By this method of understanding the Scriptures, we understand them experimentally.

Further, observe what is said to those who fear the Lord, in the chapter where our text lies: "But unto you who fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall, and ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet." Who are they who truly fear the name of the Lord? Those and those only who have passed the fire as above described; they receive healing from the Sun of righteousness, even from his wings, which are the types and allegories of the law, by which the word, or logos, is brought to our understandings. Such grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But who are the wicked which they are to tread down as ashes under their

feet? Their neighbors? Yes, according to the conduct of apostatized Christians who despise and persecute all who differ from their superstitions. But, according to truth, the wicked are their bodily, or creaturely natures and appetites. However hard it may seem to the reader, I say the real Christian lives above himself, and views his carnal appetites contemptible as ashes.

We pass to Matt. iii. 10. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." In order to see that the fire into which the trees are cast, when hewn down, is the same as that of which we have already spoken, observe verse 11. "I, indeed, baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not able to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." By this we understand that the fire in our text is that which accompanies the operation of the Holy Ghost, and is that fire with which Christ baptizes. (Verse 12.) "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Fire is mentioned in each of the three verses quoted, and its use is plainly shown, which is to burn the trees which bring not forth good fruit, to accompany the Holy Ghost in baptism, and to consume the chaff when the wheat is gathered into the garner.

Now, let us look for the doctrine of endless misery,

and see if it can be proved by the text under consideration. I will agree that the trees which do not bring forth good fruit are wicked men; and my opposers must acknowledge, that they, and all the rest of mankind, are of that description, as it is written, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." And who will pretend the Pharisees, to whom John spake, whom he calls a generation of vipers, were not wicked? And if casting the trees into the fire mean casting sinners into remediless woe, I ask if the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire mean the same thing? None will allow it; but all believe it to be salutary to all those who experience it. The reader will then observe John told this generation of vipers that he who should come after him should baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. How could those Pharisees be made endlessly miserable, and yet be saved by the power of the Holy Ghost? If we examine the burning of the chaff, we shall find it to be by the same fire, and the consequences the same.

The reader may desire some more explanation of these passages; then learn, first, the axe which is laid at the root of the trees, is the executive power of the law; the root, that Adamic nature, in which we all stand naturally; the trees, every individual of mankind; being hewn down, is being slain by the law; being cast into the fire, is being refined by the spirit of the law, whereby the soul is prepared for the kingdom of holiness and happiness. All this must be done for the best of characters in the earthly nature. In

the similitude of the wheat and chaff, we have a very natural representation of man in two states; for as man, in his natural state, is encompassed with the imperfections of the earthly Adam, so he is represented by wheat, which, when growing in the field, is encompassed with chaff, which continues to confine it, until it comes to maturity, and a process is introduced which makes the separation. Here let me make some further use of the similitude than just to answer my point of argument. Wheat, though concealed from vulgar eyes by chaff, yet, by the experienced, in the raising of grain, is perfectly well known; and we do not condemn wheat and throw it away because nature has so ordered that it is encompassed with chaff while growing in the field. So man is not to be valued the less by the wisdom of God on account of the imperfections of his earthly nature. And we may, with great propriety argue, that as chaff is necessary for the growth of wheat until it comes to maturity, so are all the imperfections of man, viewed by divine wisdom, until the creature comes to that experience, which was intended in a state of imperfection. As the process which separates wheat from chaff would disappoint the expectation of the husbandman were it applied prematurely; so the Gospel, by which men are prepared for the kingdom of God, must do its office in due time, or in the fulness of time. The state in which man is, prior to the knowledge of God and his heirship in him, is represented by wheat connected with chaff; and the state unto which he is finally brought, by divine mercy, is represented by a garner which

receives the wheat when it is separated from chaff. The unquenchable fire which consumes the chaff, is a significant figure of the power of Gospel grace to remove all excrescences from our hearts and consciences, and to prepare us for the kingdom of immortal purity. What but the nature of God can be justly called unquenchable fire? If any other principle in the universe can justly bear that appellation, it must be equal, if not superior, to God himself. An apostle says, "Our God is a consuming fire;" and I must consider it erroneous to believe that this fire is quenchable, or that there are more unquenchable fires than one. This fire of eternal truth will undoubtedly destroy everything which is in opposition to its nature; but has no power to destroy its own nature or its offspring. Now, if after these observations, the candid reader can see the eternal misery of mankind proved from the Scriptures under consideration, all I have to add, is, that he can see more than I can.

We come next to that passage, made much use of, against universal holiness and happiness, found in Matt. v. 29, 30. The force of my opponent's argument rests on being "cast into hell," connected with the like passage in St. Mark ix., where the subject is exposed to be cast into the fire that never shall be quenched.

Let us first inquire what constitutes hell. The word hell, undoubtedly, has different meanings in Scripture, sometimes signifying the grave, and some times a state of great trouble of mind in consequence of conscientious guilt. The hell, noted in our text,

is of the latter signification, as no one will dispute; but my query is, what constitutes this hell. I conceive it to be produced by the conjunction of contrary principles in the mind. All the vile appetites of man, were they gratified without the least restraint, could never produce this hell without the reflections of divine truth, in the understanding. Though the body might be debilitated by it, and impregnated with corrosive disorders, yet no disturbance is felt in the mind, until a divine principle wakes up, like a light shining in a dark place. As when a traveller enters a dark cave for rest, though poisonous serpents abide there, yet he may be undisturbed, until the sun rises and discovers to him, by what he had been entertained! He is shocked, his blood runs cold, and he is in distress until he makes his escape. It is evident that this traveller's trouble was produced by two circumstances; first, the serpents being there; and secondly, the light's giving him the knowledge of it. This glorious light of heaven is not to be accused for having tormented the traveller; and yet, had it not been for that, he might have felt no disturbance. So it is with man; he might enter into all the vile abominations of a carnal mind; he might indulge his fleshly appetite in every sensual pleasure; he might indulge his feet in every by-path; his eyes in every fleshly lust, and his hands in blood, and feel no remorse, were it not for this fire, which all the floods of corruption can never quench.

The next question to which I wish to call the attention of the reader, is, whether the salvation of

the sinner do not entirely depend on the force, power and unchangeable nature of this divine fire, which opens his eyes to see the poisonous nature of carnal pleasures and earthly-mindedness? Could all the black waters of the carnal or old man, in the least degree, quench the heat of this fire, I own the sinner is lost forever; but his salvation is hoped for if the fire be never quenched. Here, again, the reader will observe that on the very expression upon which my opponent builds his argument I rest mine; showing its propriety by applying my key text, "If any man's work be burnt he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire." The man possessed of hay, wood and stubble, would not suffer the loss of them, were it not for that fire, by which the day of the Lord is revealed; neither could he be saved, with a Gospel salvation, did not this fire consume those vile combustibles.

My opponent may urge his argument, on another expression, in connection with this Scripture, namely, "Where the worm dieth not." Should we be ever so critical in investigating these words, they would be found to favor the idea for which I contend. If, by the worm be meant the wicked, which I am willing to grant, and which I know my opposer will contend for, what I need to add, is, that all it proves, is, this fire is not death to the sinner. All the moral death to which men are exposed is carnal-mindedness; and all the moral life of which they can be possessed is contained in that spirit of divine animation which, in the Scripture under consideration, is represented by fire that

never can be quenched. I am as fully persuaded of this truth as I am of any idea in all my study; and I believe my reader will be of my opinion if he will observe what Christ has further said concerning it in the conversation where the text lies. (See Mark ix. 49, 50.) "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." All who observe attentively will easily see that the fire with which every one is to be salted is the same that never shall be quenched, and is that salt which Christ exhorts us to have in ourselves, which is productive of peace. The reader will easily see the impropriety of supposing such Scriptures indicative of the endless misery of mankind; and the propriety of understanding them consonant with my key text, signifying the destruction of sin, and the salvation of the sinner.

We next take notice of Matt. vii. 13, 14. The argument against me is rested on these expressions, namely, "And many there be which go in thereat," "And few there be that find it." In order to detect this argument as laconically as possible, I first ask, do the words few and many mean the same number when applied to the same subject of inquiry? I presume all will answer, no. I then ask, is it proper or just to say the word many in Isa. liii. 11, where it is written, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities," means the same number as the word few in the text under

consideration? Again, Rev. vii. After an account is given of the hundred and forty and four thousand, it is said, verse 9: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Will any one doubt the salvation of the many, spoken of by Isaiah, or the great multitude, quoted from Revelation? If they do not, they can, with no propriety, contend that the few, spoken of by Christ, in the passage under examination, are all that will finally obtain salvation by him.

Let us now take notice of the text in its true sense. The way of life is now what it always was and always will be, which is Christ, the heavenly man; and the way to destruction is what it always was and always will be, which is the earthly Adam, or carnal, or old man. Christ spake, in the then present tense, showing that the multitude were all travelling in earthly-mindedness, which is death; and that those who had truly found him, of whom Moses and the prophets did write, who walked in the Spirit, and not in the flesh, were but few.

My opponent, seeing his objection, which rested on the words few and many answered, and the text rationally explained, aside from his idea, will wish to infer an argument, from what I have acknowledged, to oppose me. He will say, if the multitude, under the law, were not acquainted with the Gospel, they must be forever lost from holiness and happiness, as they died in that state of ignorance. I have already

attended to this objection, but wish to write a few words more on the subject. The supposition that the soul cannot be altered for the better, after the death of the body, will confound the ideas of many who believe it. You ask one who believes there is no alteration after death, whether he believes the saint to be as perfect while he lives in this world as he will be hereafter? And he will say, no. Ask him if he expect to be perfectly fitted for heaven and eternal glory while he inhabits this vile body, and he will answer, no; and yet he holds there is no alteration after death. Why the idea has become so general that souls cannot be enlightened and converted from sin to holiness after the death of the body is difficult for me to determine. If the soul continue a rational being, cannot the All-wise communicate knowledge to it out of the natural body as well as he can in it? If the soul, after death, have a moral existence, it must be a subject of moral principles, and stand accountable to a moral law adapted to his moral capacity; and it must be as much the duty of souls hereafter to yield obedience to God as it is while they are in the body; and to preclude the possibility of such obedience would be a dishonor to such a law. To deny the existence of those moral principles in the world to come, is denying the existence of rational happiness, or punishment. My opponent will say, if God have revealed to us, in the Scriptures of truth, that he will not afford any privilege after death to those who do not become true converts of Christ in this world, we have no right to say the reverse, however much our

reason may be put to confusion. I answer, that may be granted without injury to my argument, as no such revelation has been made; when it is it will be early enough to believe it.

The parable of the tares of the field comes next under consideration. This passage needs not be quoted at large, as the reader has it perfectly in his mind. In order to do this subject justice, I will endeavor to state the objection on the ground upon which I believe my opponent would choose to rest it; which is, the tares mean wicked men and women who are impenitent; and as the tares are to be burnt, it signifies the awful state into which God will cast the wicked in the world to come. For the sake of argument, I will grant, for a moment, what the objector states, and further inquire, if the righteous, or believers in Christ, are represented by wheat and the wicked by tares, what is meant by the field, in which these two kinds of seed are sown? It will not answer any one's mind to say that the field is the same as the seed sown; then, what is it? Says my opponent, it is the earth, on which the righteous and the wicked live: be it so: then let us seek the consequences. Of the tares, it is said, he that sowed them is the devil. According to this mode of reasoning, God has produced some of the inhabitants of the earth, and the devil some; and all the wrong there is in the affair is a matter of trespass. The devil has sown ground that did not belong to him, as it appears by the text that the field belonged to him who sowed the good seed; and that he who sowed the tares occupied ground that

did not belong to him. I do not see why the devil could not have created an earth as easily as to create men and women; and then he might have occupied his own territory unmolested! I do not wish to take too much advantage of an error, but I wish to make this matter so plain that no reader may fail of seeing the merits of the query. I will, therefore, inquire further, what constitutes those wicked whom the devil placed on this earth? Have they ever deserted the service of Satan; and, rebelling against their maker, sinfully yielded obedience to God? If they have faithfully served their creator, I can see no sinfulness in them, and it would be bad argument to say that God would subject beings to his government whom he did not make. The thoughts of such consequences wean the objector's mind from the premises which afford them, and other answers to the question proposed must be sought for. What is meant by wheat? what by tares? and what by field, in which the wheat and tares are sown? I think the answers must be as follow: The wheat means the same as is meant by seed spoken of in a former parable, the explanation of which introduces the one under examination. In the parable of the sower it is plain that Christ meant the Gospel, or the doctrine of truth by seed which he sowed; and by the various kinds of soil into which the seed fell is meant the various circumstances, in a moral sense, of those to whom he preached the word of the kingdom. The truth then is plain; by wheat is meant the true doctrine of Christ; the tares mean false doctrines which would be introduced by An-

tichrist; and the field is mankind, or the church. Christ undoubtedly meant to represent the Christian apostacy in this parable; in which state of the Church we find truth and error mixed, the Gospel of life and the doctrine of endless damnation like wheat and tares in the same field. Christians have framed to themselves doctrinal creeds and modes of faith, and called them orthodox; they have bowed down to their images, and said, These are the gods which brought us up out of the land of Egypt; they have endeavored, by fire and sword, to destroy heresy, in which they have been as unskilful as Christ represented in the parable; they were as likely to root up the wheat as the tares. But when these doctrines have brought forth their fruits, and it shall appear evident to all that evil consequences have always attended those creeds formed by men, it will be easy for those who are wise in the Gospel to gather those tares and burn them with that fire which consumes the hay, wood, and stubble; and to gather the true doctrine of Gospel promises into the garner, or Church of Christ, no more to be mixed with tares or falsehood.

What a pity it is, speaking in reference to partial good and evil, that professed ministers of Christ should so vehemently contend for the truth of doctrines which they themselves acknowledge no being wishes true, but the devil and his subordinate wicked spirits. It is the general topic of the day in this enlightened land, contended for in almost every pulpit, that some of God's rational dependent creatures must, of necessity, suffer in endless torments, with

devils, to blaspheme God forever, and never cease from sin, which they who believe and preach it wish and daily pray might be false. If false doctrines were intended by tares in this parable, and those tares are to be destroyed, the consequence must be salutary to mankind, for they will then know the truth, and the truth will make them free.

My opponent may urge that his ideas of the parable of the tares are most consonant to the explanation which Christ gave it, as it is there said, the tares are the children of the wicked one, etc. I do not wish to explain Christ's explanation; but I believe the reader of the present day would be as likely to misunderstand the explanation as the parable itself. I know Christ said the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one. But I do not conceive that by children of the kingdom in this parable is meant the same as is meant by the same expressions in some other passages; instance one, see Matt. viii. 12. "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness," etc.; no one will suppose that the children of the kingdom, in the above quotation, are the same with those in the parable. Whatever is born of God is a child of God; and this may be said of a person who is born in the kingdom of truth and grace; or of that true faith by which he is so born, this faith being a divine production. For proof, see 1 John iii. 9. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Here, no doubt, a human being may be intended; again, see chap. v. 4. "For whatsoever is born of God

overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." In this passage true faith is said to be born of God, and therefore my idea that the truths of the Gospel ought to be considered the children of the kingdom, according to the parable, may appear consistent. I am disposed, however, to condescend so much to my opponent as to acknowledge that the wicked are sometimes said to be the children of the devil, etc. (See St. John viii. 44.) "Ye are of your father the devil." (See verse 37.) "I know that ye be Abraham's seed." Again, verse 39. "If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." I am sure my opponent would not wish to prove more from the above quotations than that those Jews were virtually the children of Abraham, but characteristically the children of the devil. Then, admitting wicked men are represented by tares in the parable, and this representation is a representation of character, then the destruction of the tares signifies a destruction of evil character, which argument, though I do not want, is forced upon me to my advantage in the query.

The whole of the 25th chapter of Matthew, which contains the parable of the virgins, of the talents, and of the sheep and goats, is considered directly against the universal holiness and happiness of mankind. In the parable of the virgins, those were called foolish who took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, who were not ready to go into the marriage when the bridegroom came, but afterwards knocked, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, but

were answered by Christ, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Those foolish virgins, says my opposer, represent those who are to be rejected at last, who will be miserable as long as God exists. On supposition that were the case, how can it be proved? Is there anything in this Scripture that positively testifies that to be the case? My opponent will not contend there is, but only a parabolical allusion to the eternal destruction of the wicked, not positive testimony of it. But I wish to say it is my opinion that a doctrine ought to be proved by plain testimony before we can be authorized to apply allegories and parables to it. Supposing I were unable to give any rational account of the meaning of this parable, would it give my opponent any advantage? Would it not rest with him to prove that his application of the parable is just before he ought to bring it as an objection against the doctrine for which I argue? If the reader can find anything in the parable which necessarily means endless misery, all I can say is he has made a discovery which I have not. But as I do not judge myself altogether ignorant of the true meaning of this parable, I will trouble the reader with a few inquiries explanatory of the passage. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." When? Is that time yet future? If it be, nothing is to be understood by the connection of the discourse. The word, then, has reference to a designated time, which we find in the 24th chapter and 34th verse. "Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things shall be fulfilled."

According to the words of Christ, who undoubtedly knew his own meaning better than we do, all things prophesied of, in the 24th chapter, were fulfilled in that generation. Look back to the 23d chapter and 36th verse. "Verily I say unto you all these things shall come upon this generation." The time of that generation was the time of the fulfilment of all things spoken of in the 24th and 25th chapters; there is no other time designated for the word, then, to apply to. I must inquire what kingdom of heaven this is which is represented by ten virgins, five of which are wise and five are foolish. One-half of the kingdom of heaven, according to this parable, is composed of foolish virgins! This cannot mean the kingdom of eternal righteousness, where wisdom in her purity dwells.

The foregoing observations may prepare the mind for the following concise explanation. The Jews, or God's covenant people, under the legal dispensation, are here represented by ten virgins. The close of the law dispensation, and the introduction of the Gospel is the time alluded to in the parable. The lamps signify the rites and ordinances of the Levitical priesthood, which contained the light of the expected Messiah. The oil, which the wise had in their vessels, with their lamps, was the knowledge of what those figures represented. The foolish, not looking from these rites to the antitype, but expecting salvation by the letter, were called foolish. John was the friend of the bridegroom, and was the voice of one, crying, behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet

him. Midnight represents the state of gross darkness which then covered the people.

When Christ entered the sanctum sanctorum by his resurrection, and those whom he had chosen were ready, the door of the law was forever closed. The situation of the Jews ever since is represented by virgins without, knocking for entrance, etc.

The reader will undoubtedly acknowledge the propriety of the above short explanation, but will endeavor to make some efforts against me with those blinded Jews. The idea that the Jews were so rejected by Christ that they would never obtain mercy by him, perhaps, is not warrantable from the Scriptures. The reverse appears evident from the testimony of Christ to them. (See Matt. xxiii. 37, 38, 39.) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The fore part of the above is frequently recited to prove the endless rejection of the Jews, but the latter clause fully refutes such a sentiment. For, though Christ spake of the desolate state in which the Jews would be for a season, yet he points to a time when they should see him and call him blessed. If my opponent can reconcile this glorious prophecy with the endless exclusion of those Jews, I will not contend against him any more.

We shall find it no less difficult to support the doctrine of endless misery by the parable of the talents than by the parable of the virgins. The words which close this parable are what my opponent would found his objection upon. (See verse 30.) "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." That, says my opposer, means endless misery; but how am I to know it does? Or how does he know it? Does the text necessarily carry that meaning? No, it does not. The Psalmist says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." But if the night of weeping be endless, when will the morning of joy come? The prophet Isaiah says that God shall wipe tears from all faces; but if Christ meant, in this parable, that some of the human race should weep to an endless eternity, he was of a different opinion from the prophet. Can we be justified in explaining the Scriptures into a positive contradiction? Must tradition cause the whole Bible to bow down, on hearing all kinds of music, to the images which, by the craft of men, have been set up? Must the vain suppositions of men supersede the divine oracle? Must the divine light of the plain testimony of the spirit of prophecy become dim before the moonshine of tradition? Without explaining this parable particularly, which I have done in my Notes, I must dismiss it, observing, it represents the same to which I applied the former.

The parable of the sheep and goats, which concludes the 25th of Matthew, has been made great use of to

oppose universal holiness and happiness, and to support the doctrine of endless misery. Those arguments have been rested on the last words of the chapter, which read thus, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." The word everlasting being applied to the misery of the wicked, it is contended that it must be endless. But I have sufficiently proved that the word everlasting is frequently applied to events which are not strictly eternal; therefore, to contend for endless misery, from the force of that word, is begging ground which ought to have been given up before now.

The adversaries of the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness have contended, with great seeming assurance, that if the word everlasting, which is here applied to the punishment of the wicked, do not mean an endless duration, the word eternal, used in the text, may not, as they both come from the same root; and, consequently, they have urged that the happiness of the righteous may come to an end if the misery of the wicked do. In answer to so much ingenuity and argument, I say, the word eternal is not applied to the duration of happiness, but to the nature of that life which is brought to life through the Gospel; and as that life is of the nature of the unchangeable Deity, we justly believe it to be endless; but I grant the word eternal being applied to it does not prove it to be so. Neither do I suppose it certain that those who entered into this life at that time continued invariably in the spirit of it. I believe a person may, by the grace of God, enter into the enjoyments of this eternal

life at one time, and at another, by reason of his folly, may lose those enjoyments. Now, having shown the weakness of what the pretended critic has argued, I will give a few leading features of the parable; not taking up time to be particular for reasons already given.

The time of Christ's coming in his glory was the day of Pentecost. His holy angels, with whom he came, were his chosen apostles. His glory is the gospel of eternal life. Sheep and goats signify believers and unbelievers. Right hand and left mean gospel and law. The believer stands in the gospel of life. The unbeliever is condemned already, and the wrath of God, in the letter of the law, abideth upon him. For proof that Christ's coming was in that generation, see Matthew xvi. 27, 28. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." If Christ is to be understood as he said, if his words explain his meaning, it is clear that his coming in his glory, with his angels, to reward men according to their works, was some time in the lifetime of those to whom he spake. If this be true, which my opponent with his eyes open will not dispute, then no objection can be stated, from this parable, against the final holiness and happiness of all men. Should any say (as many have said), that they see no parable in the last paragraph of the 25th of St. Matthew, I will only add, if there be no parable

in it, it only respects two kinds of animals called sheep and goats, and we have nothing to do with it. We come to the last paragraph in the 16th of St. Luke, of which much use has been made against the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness; and is said to contain a very literal account of the death of a rich man, and of his being in hell after death; and the death of a poor man, and his future happiness. It is contended by the most of those who oppose the doctrine which I endeavor to vindicate, that this paragraph ought to be taken and understood in its most literal sense, and that Christ did not intend it as a parable. Though I am very far from believing this paragraph to be a literal account, yet I will admit it for the better accommodating of the argument. For if I do not, but only give my opinion on the passage, my opponent will contend that the objection is not answered as he rests it on the literality of the passage. Admitting the account just as literal as my opposer views it, is it possible for him to substantiate an objection against me from it? I think not; for were it possible to prove that an individual who died in the days of Noah had continued from that time until now in a state of misery, it would have no force to prove that such an individual would be miserable a single year longer, much less to prove that he would be endlessly so. Further, could it be proved that a person who recently died would be in the worst of torments for a million of years to come, it would fall infinitely short of proving that he would suffer endlessly. If the suffering of a rational being for a time prove that this being must be endlessly

miserable, the proof stands against the whole family of Adam, not excepting Jesus himself. If my opponent be under the necessity of giving me the argument in this particular, which I know he must, then what evidence has he left, in the Scripture under consideration, to prove endless misery? If it be urged against me that the gulf between Abraham and the rich man was impassable, it proves nothing with regard to its duration. Let us now examine the passage a little, taking notice of the common ideas of it. It is said, that the rich man lifted up his eyes in hell. Now, it is believed and argued that souls in hell are as destitute of any principle of goodness as the devil in which people believe; that they are fully engaged in the devil's service, and opposed to anything and all things which are favorable to the kingdom of the Saviour. This being the case, how is it that we have such an account of the prayer which the rich man made to his father Abraham, in favor of his five brethren? He seems to be anxious for their welfare, and desires that they might not come into such a place of torment as he was in. How would such a prayer please Belzebub, the prince of devils? Did I believe in such a being, according to the general idea which people have of him, I should suppose he would be very much alarmed on hearing such benevolent prayers made in his dark dominions! The prayer seems to favor the plan of gospel grace more than the vile purposes of Satan, though it did not seem to dictate the matter exactly according to the divine purpose. It is generally believed that the devil is desirous of getting as many

as possible into misery; if so, and the rich man desired that his brethren might not come into that place of torment, let his reasons be what they might, it is evident that his desires were opposed to the devil's. "A kingdom, divided against itself, cannot stand." Again, it is argued by some that those who are in heaven will rejoice in consequence of the misery of those whom they see in torment, as the justice of God will, by their torments, be made to appear more glorious than it otherwise could, which, by the way, answers the most fervent desires of Satan. This being granted, should those who are in heaven, on seeing those in hell who in this world were their nearest connections, feel the smallest regret, much more desire to grant them assistance, it would be a complete violation of that justice which confined them there. But in our text it is shown that those who are in Abraham's bosom are desirous of going to the rich man, and their object is plainly seen, that it is to relieve him from his torments (see verse 26), "So that those who would pass from hence to you cannot." It is very evident that those who were in Abraham's bosom were desirous of assisting the rich man; and, according to the common idea, it must have been deemed a rebellion against the will and justice of God, in consequence of which, if the devil deserved to be cast out of heaven for his disobedience, these undoubtedly deserved the same condemnation! If we look impartially into these things, it is easy to see that something wrong has been entertained in the common idea. By a little attention to the introduction of this

paragraph, the reader may easily see the whole was intended as a similitude to show the adultery which the high priest would commit in rejecting the Gospel and endeavoring to obtain justification by attending to the law in the letter, the situation of that part of Israel that was broken off through unbelief, which is represented by five foolish virgins in the 25th of Matthew; the conversion of the Gentiles to Christianity, and their reception into Abraham's faith, etc.

We pass to take notice of 2d Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. My opponent depends on the words "everlasting destruction," on which to found his argument against the salvation of all men; but as I have before proved that the word everlasting does not necessarily mean an endless duration, my opponent would fail in his argument, even if he could show that the word everlasting in the text was applied to the duration of suffering. But this he cannot do; for the word everlasting is not applied to the duration of punishment, but to the destruction with which the sinner is punished. That which is destroyed, I grant, is endlessly destroyed, But here I call in my key text to show that it is the hay, wood, and stubble which are to be destroyed. This will appear evident, if we observe the nature of the fire mentioned in our text: "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance," etc. This fire is that in which Christ is revealed, and it comes from heaven. Is not this the fire with which he baptizes? Is not the fire revealed to destroy the hay, the wood, and

the stubble? Undoubtedly. And is the endless misery of the sinner to be proved from the action of that divine fire which alone is able to effect his salvation? But the objector says the text reads for itself: "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" and if the sinner be punished from the presence of the Lord, he cannot be blessed in it, where there are joys forevermore. Answer: There is not a place in the universe which is out of the presence of an omnipresent God. Therefore, to put a sinner from the presence of the Lord, he must be put out of the universe. But what means the text? says the reader. Answer: that divine light and heat, which destroys moral darkness and purges man from all sin, is from the presence of the Lord as a production of the divine presence, as it is written concerning the man of sin, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming. If God were not able to punish the sinner in the manner described in the text, I should despair of his salvation; but blessed be that divine spirit of light and love; it truly takes such vengeance on the sinner as is worthy of a God. It makes him hate sin, brings down the high mountains of his pride, takes away the fig-leaf garment, and clothes the man in his right mind.

There is a passage in the 12th of Matthew, the 31st and 32d verses, which has been contended for as an unanswerable objection to universal salvation. The text reads thus: "Wherefore I say unto you, all man-

ner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." The common idea of this world and the world to come is the present life of man on earth, and that state in which man exists hereafter. Could it be proved that this was the right meaning of the word world, there would be something more in the text than I can now see. Some, who have ably defended the doctrine of universal salvation have admitted the common idea of the passage, so far as it goes to prove future misery, yet have abundantly proved that it would come to an end. But if the word world have the signification of age or dispensation, as will not be disputed, it will be impossible to prove that anything, beyond what may be experienced by men in this mortal state, was intended in this text. We are informed that Christ came once in the end of the world to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself. The world, in the end of which Christ came, was undoubtedly the dispensation of the legal priesthood; according to which idea the world which was then to come is the dispensation of gospel light which rose on the Gentile world for the purpose of bringing them to the knowledge and worship of the true God; which dispensation ends with the conversion of the fulness of the Gentiles, and will be succeeded by that in which Israel will be visited by the

spirit of their Messiah, and shall say, Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

What I have written on this subject will show the reader the propriety of supposing that the sin which the Pharisees committed in blaspheming the Holy Spirit, by which Christ wrought miracles, has been visited upon their descendants even to this day, and will continue upon them until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. But I see no need of carrying the meaning of these words to an endless eternity, or even beyond the experience of man in this natural life. Therefore, admitting the doctrine of future punishment true, I cannot see it proved from these words.

Could it be proved that eternal or endless misery was a natural production of the divine nature, there being an unchangeable principle to support such misery, the argument on my part must be given up. If sin be, in a moral sense, the cause of misery, should sin ever be brought to an end, its consequences, which are misery, would also come to an end. If my opponent can tell me how Jesus will finish sin and make an end of transgression, and yet sin and transgression continue as long as God exists, he will puzzle me more than all his objections have been able to do.

CHAPTER III.

REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN UNIVERSAL RECONCILIATION.

HAVING answered, as I hope to the reader's satisfaction, some of the most important objections against God's universal goodness to his creatures, I shall now turn on the other hand, and give the reader some of my evidences for believing in the so-much-despised doctrine of universal holiness and happiness. First, I reason from the nature of divine goodness, in which all pretend to believe, and none dare in a direct sense to deny, that God could not, consistent with himself, create a being that would experience more misery than happiness. Secondly, if God be infinitely good, his goodness is commensurate with his power and knowledge; then all beings whom his power produced are the objects of his goodness; and to prove that any being was destitute of it would prove that Deity's knowledge did not comprehend such being. Thirdly, there is as much propriety in saying that God is infinite in power, but that he did not create all things, as there is in saying, though God be infinite in goodness, yet part of his creatures will never be the partakers of it. It might as well be said that God is infinite in knowledge, and yet ignorant of the most part of events which are daily and hourly taking place, as to

say that he is infinitely good, and yet only a few of his creatures were designed for happiness. Fourthly, if the Almighty, as we believe him to be, did not possess power sufficient to make all his creatures happy, it was not an act of goodness in him to create them. If he have that power, but possess no will for it, it makes a bad matter as much worse as is possible. I then reduce my opponent to the necessity of telling me if those whom he believes will be endlessly lost, be those whom God could save, but would not, or those whom he would save, but could not. If it be granted that God has both power and will to save all men, it is granting all I want for a foundation of my faith.

I would further argue that, as man is constituted to enjoy happiness, on moral principles (to the knowledge of which principles we come by degrees), it is as reasonable to believe that all men were intended to obtain a consummate knowledge of the moral principles of their nature as that any of Adam's race were. There is not an individual of the whole family of man who is perfectly satisfied with those enjoyments which earth and time afford him; the soul is constituted for nobler pleasures, which to me is an evidence that God has provided for all men some better things than can be found in earthly enjoyments, where we find but little except vanity and disappointment. There is an immortal desire in every soul for future existence and happiness. For the truth of this assertion I appeal to the consciences of my readers. Why should the Almighty implant this desire in us if he

never intended to satisfy it? Supposing a mother has the power of modifying the desires and appetite of her child, would she cause it to want that which she could not get for it? Would she take pleasure in seeing her child pine for fruits which did not grow in the country where she lived, and which she could not get? Or would she prefer the anguish of the child to its happiness, when it was in her power to grant all it wanted? If such a mother were to be found, who would call her a godly woman? Could her child, thus tormented, rise up and call her blessed? No, surely it could not.

I further argue that all wise, good, and exemplary men wish for the truth of the doctrine for which I contend; they earnestly pray for the salvation of all men, and do all in their power, by the grace of God, to dissuade men from sin, to the obedience of the gospel; they enlist willingly into the service of virtue, to endeavor to win proselytes to holiness; their object is the destruction of sin, and the advancement of righteousness, and they believe, and I think justly, that God will bless their labors.

None but wicked men would wish for the endless duration of sin. Were it left to the carnal mind, it would wish for nothing but the privilege of drinking in iniquity forever. But those who truly love God and holiness desire night and day to overcome the vile propensities of their own deceitful hearts, and pray for the reconciliation of others to holiness and happiness. Now, why should we suppose that God is more of the mind of the wicked than of the right-

eous? If it be God's spirit in us which causes us to pray for the destruction of sin, is it reasonable to say that this same spirit has determined that sin shall always exist? Are we not right in judging of the nature and character of God from the dictates of his spirit in us? If so, does this spirit teach us the necessity of endless transgression and misery? I wish the reader to keep in mind that I hold sin and misery inseparably connected, and holiness and happiness so likewise.

I further argue, if any of the human race be endlessly miserable, the whole must be, providing they all know it; for, reasoning from that spirit of benevolence which is necessary to a conformity to the principles of holiness, I prove it impossible for a well-disposed man to see another in misery, without bearing a very sensible proportion of such misery. If it be argued that this idea is wrong, and that the spirit which dictates it is of the evil one; I say, in answer, all good men in the world feel it to be a truth; and no man ever exhibited more of it than the Saviour of the world. Man is constituted with powers of sympathy; and, while these principles last, he cannot enjoy complete happiness and see one of his fellow-creatures in torment. I mistrust some one will say, then Christ is not completely happy, nor the saints who have gone before us. I have no objection to the observation; but think I see a divine beauty in the idea. I will query a little on the subject. It is generally believed that Christ existed before he was born in Bethlehem; and it is evident from the Scriptures that he did. But I

would inquire, what was his situation? Was it a state of complete happiness? I think likely this question will generally be answered in the affirmative. Then I further ask, had he no desire for the salvation of sinners before he came into our world? Here the question must be answered in the affirmative, let the other question be answered as it may; for, if that were not the case, why did he come for the express purpose of saving them? If he willed and intended the salvation of mankind, and also determined to encounter all the sufferings that were finally laid upon him in favor of so worthy an object, it is evident his happiness was not complete; neither do I believe it will be until he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

If any one should be so particular as to query, asking, if the Almighty himself be not desirous of the salvation of sinners; and if so, how can his happiness be complete? I answer, a being, to whom events do not take place in succession, nor time pass away, with whom an eternity is a present now, whose knowledge is intuitive, and who can neither hope nor anticipate, can neither increase nor decrease in happiness. But when we speak of God, abstractedly, our words ought to be few and chosen.

I have, I think, sufficiently proved in this work that Jesus Christ is a created, dependent being, and that he stands at the head of the creation of man, etc. If I be right in that idea, I think I may reasonably argue that he is a being to whom events take place in succession, who hopes and anticipates, and who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised

the shame. Therefore, until the great work of his mission is completed, I cannot conceive that his happiness will be complete. If it be argued that Christ, when on the cross, said it was finished, and that, in a moral sense, he felt no more pain for sinners, I have a right to object, for I do not know what warrant the Scripture gives for believing all this argument. That the sufferings of Christ, as to answer the type of a sin-offering, were then ended, is a reasonable idea; but to suppose that Christ was then dispossessed of that principle which caused him to feel for the woe of mankind, does not appear reasonable. I have no idea that the glorious Captain of our salvation now suffers as he did, when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But I believe that he whose soul travailed for the redemption of man, now increases in joy as the work of reconciliation is going on, to the destruction of sin and the conversion of sinners. He has told us that there is more joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. I do not conceive that one part of human nature can be made perfectly happy while the rest are in misery. When St. Paul spake of those who died in faith, not having obtained the promise, he says, "God having provided some better things for us, that they, without us, could not be made perfect."

Those who are the most devout on earth are the most desirous for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the deliverance of themselves and their fellow-men from sin and misery. For the sake of a case,

I will suppose a Christian, to-day, is exercised with fervent desires for the reconciliation of sinners; at night, he dies. Do all those holy desires cease at death? If they do not, but do continue, though the happiness of the soul be great, yet it is, at least, capable of being enlarged, or increased, by the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause among men.

How the idea ever got place in the human mind, that even fathers and mothers, in the world to come, would rejoice to see their own offspring in endless flames and hopeless torments, I can hardly conceive; though the probability is, it was first invented to shun, in theory, those difficulties not otherwise to be avoided. I wish to use this error as prudently as possible; but I wish to have it rightfully understood, and judged of impartially. Will perfect reconciliation to God have this effect? I know it is contended that it will; but what evidence have we of it? Was not Christ reconciled, or in a state of conformity to God's law? Did he manifest joy at the sufferings of mankind? When he looked on Jerusalem, that abominable city, and knew that its chiefs would be his murderers, when he spake of the dreadful calamities just ready to burst on their devoted heads, how did he feel? Streams of sorrow break from the eye of innocence; in his grief, he spake of their destruction, but prophecies of their seeing him again, when they should welcome him, saying, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

If perfect reconciliation to God will effect complete happiness at the sight of human misery, the more we

are reconciled to God the more satisfaction we should take in seeing our fellow-creatures miserable! Then, those who can look on men in distress with the least sorrow are the most reconciled to divine goodness; and those who feel the most sorrow at the afflictions of their fellow-men are the most perverse and wicked! Some may say, heaven is entirely different from this world, and when we get there we shall be totally changed from what we now are; therefore, it will not do to argue what we shall be there from what we ought to be here. Then the awful fact is, all we call goodness here will be called badness there; and that which we call badness here will be goodness there!

If the effects of moral holiness in the world to come should be different from what they are here, I wish to be informed on what moral principle the change is made. If these things be so, the souls of the cruel need but little alteration to prepare them for heaven, and that little laid out in making them what we should call worse. Such a heaven as this does not, I hope, exist in the universe. My opponent will urge his argument still further on this subject, and say, it is not the misery of the wicked that affords so much pleasure to those who are in heaven, but their joy is increased in consequence of the execution of justice. This, however, is giving up what is contended for, namely, that every degree of misery will create thousands of degrees of happiness, because, could divine justice be as well understood without this misery as with it, the misery itself would do no good. I am willing to grant that a good man will prefer the

execution of justice to his own private ease, or the partial happiness of a criminal. But how would a judge appear who should manifest joy and gladness on pronouncing the sentence of death upon one of his fellow-men? Who would not turn from such a court with disgust and deep abhorrence? To call such a circumstance an instance in which men have an occasion to rejoice is a violation of our senses. I will say for myself, I neither expect nor desire perfect happiness while I see my fellow-men in misery; I had rather be possessed of that sympathy which causes me to feel for another than to enjoy an unsocial pleasure in a frosty heaven of misanthropy? Is it possible that we should be completely happy and see those in misery whom we love? No one will say we can. Are we not commanded to love our enemies? Can we be truly happy and not love them? Surely we cannot; then how can we be completely happy and see them miserable? A parent may be persuaded to attend his child while a surgeon performs an amputation; but with what acute feelings his heart is agitated! How eagerly would he inhale the pain and make it his own were it possible? But there is something in all this that is tolerable; he is in hopes of saving the life of his child: were it not for his hopes could he endure the sight? But what is all this compared with a parent viewing his child in endless flames! O parents, what a blessed circumstance it is that when we are called to part with our children on earth, we can mingle a little joy with the sorrow in hoping that they belong to the deathless family in heaven! If the good

desires which are found in the Christian heart are ever to be satisfied universal subjection to the government of Christ will surely take place: if virtue ever gains an universal victory over sin and vice, universal holiness and happiness will be the consequence. Man exists on such a principle as renders him capable of improving in knowledge and happiness, which he obtains by experience; and it is very evident that as the wheels of time move man is fast advancing, which favors the idea that at some period known to Deity the desired haven will be obtained in the acquisition of that wisdom which is from above.

When we send our children to school it is for the purpose of learning that of which they are ignorant; and it is by degrees that those sciences are obtained which constitute them learned. When a child first takes a quill in hand to write, he blunders, but does not blunder so as to imitate the copy, neither will two out of a thousand imitate each other.

Men begin their moral existence in their separate capacity in the same way; unacquainted with the skill of their divine preceptor, they err from sacred rules and differ from their fellow-pupils. Jars and broils ensue, and sorrow and woe are the consequences. But as they become taught they conform to the divine rules of their master, and learn that their happiness consists in being united. Happiness is the greatest object of all rational beings, and no one will follow any particular object any longer than he thinks it subservient to his main one. The reason why men sin is, they think, and think erroneously, that they shall

obtain more happiness in so doing than in following the dictates of truth. But is it reasonable to suppose that the error will never be discovered? Will the sinner never find his mistake? O yes, says my opposer, to his eternal confusion and endless misery! But stop a moment; if he find his mistake he will abandon the object; and when he ceases to sin he begins to reform and approximate towards holiness and happiness. I have sufficiently argued that man cannot be miserable, in consequence of moral condemnation, any longer than he is, in a moral sense, a sinner. Then he must sin endlessly in order to be miserable so long; which if so, he will never find his mistake, he will never learn that righteousness and truth are more productive of happiness than sin. But I think it erroneous to suppose that a being who is capable of learning anything cannot learn some time short of eternity that it is better to do right than wrong. Should we argue, however, that that might in some cases be true, it would destroy the idea of complete and positive misery for which my opponent contends. Complete misery would not admit of a prospect which could administer the smallest hope; in which case, the soul would have no object which could possibly induce it to action; then would the soul become inert, and its existence would be destroyed, and become not a subject of happiness or misery.

I would argue again, from a reasonable idea, admitted by all, namely, that mankind, in their moral existence, originated in God. Why, then, do we deny his final assimilation with the fountain from whence

he sprang? The streams and rivulets which water the hill-country run in every direction, as the make of land occasions. They are stained with various mines and soils through which they pass; but at last they find their entrance into the ocean, where their different courses are at an end, and they are tempered like the fountain which receives them. Though man, at present, forms an aspect similar to the waters in their various courses, yet, in the end of his race, I hope he will enjoy an union with his God, and with his fellows.

Having given a few hints, from the nature of moral beings, in favor of my general plan, I shall beg the attention of the reader to some evidences, from the Scriptures of truth, in favor of universal holiness and happiness. The method I intend to pursue will be conclusive; for I am determined to admit no Scripture as evidence, in this case, that needs any interpretation to cause it to mean what I wish to prove; therefore I shall produce but a small part of the Scriptures which I conceive have a direct meaning in favor of Universalism.

It will not be doubted that man was created in Christ, who, the apostle says, is the head of every man. To this point I have already attended in this work, and sufficiently proved it. I have also argued that the formation of man was after his creation, as appears from the account given in Genesis. Now, what I wish to prove from Scripture is a complete deliverance of the whole humanity from mortality, and the governing power of the law of sin which is

found in our members, to a reinstatement in the heavenly Adam of immortality, where the law of the spirit of life will be the whole governing power to which man will be subjected. It seems reasonable to conclude that man in a spiritual sense was created in Christ, the heavenly nature, as his body was formed in Adam, the earthly. And as all our bodies came from that one formation, so all our spirits came from that one creation. As it is by the nature of this one formed creature that we are all brought into a state of moral death, so it must be by the spirit of this one created man that all will be brought finally to the enjoyment of spiritual life and peace. There is a passage in Acts iii. 20, 21, which reads very literally in proof of my argument. "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Can there be any dispute, in the reader's mind, respecting the nature of this restitution? Will any one pretend that this restitution is only reinstating man in a state of probation? If that were the object of Christ's coming into our world, if that were intended by his death and resurrection, was not the work already done when Peter spake these words? Why then does he speak of the times of restitution yet to come? Or, if this restitution of all things only meant the restitution of honor to the law, by the sufferings of Christ, I ask, again, was this not also past, when Peter spake these words? I cannot conceive that a restitution

of man to any state which he has occupied in flesh and blood is worthy of the Gospel plan; for it is said of man, in his earthly nature, his best estate is vanity. But if we view the plan of the restitution of all things, which is to be accomplished in the fulness of times, a restitution or restoration from mortality and sin to a state of immortality and righteousness, it is consistent with Scripture, and worthy of God. If my opponent, in his struggles, should say, things do not refer to men, I would ask, what the word things does mean in Scripture when used as it is in the passage quoted? I cannot guess to what he would apply it. I will quote two passages more where the word is used. (See Col. i. 20.) "And (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." That the things to be reconciled are men may be seen by verse 21. "And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." The way in which Christ effected this work is expressed in the 22d verse, "in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight." (Eph. i. 10.) "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth." The reader will do well to observe the similarity between the last quoted passage and that in Acts. There, it is said, "until the times of the restitution of all things," and here, it is said, "that in

the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ." The 11th verse says, "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance." No doubt can be entertained respecting the things to be restored and reconciled and gathered together in Christ. There is part of the words of Peter which I quoted from Acts which ought to be particularly noticed in order to cause those who have said the doctrine for which I contend is a new doctrine, to consider whether they are right in that matter. The words are these, "Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." If all God's holy prophets believed in the doctrine of the restitution of all things, I hardly think it is so modern as some pretend.

I will next call the attention of the reader to what the holy prophets have said in support of the doctrine of the restitution of all things. But as their testimony stands on the promise of God to Abraham, which contains the fulness of the doctrine for which I contend, I will notice it, in the first place, as the sum of all which the prophets have said concerning the coming of the Just One and the glory of his kingdom. (See Gen. xii. 3.) "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This promise is expressed in chapter xxii. verse 18, thus, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." That there may be no dispute what this blessing is, and that the reader may see it to be justification through faith, see Gal. iii. 8. "And

the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." What a glorious foundation for hope is here. How blessed was Abraham when he rejoiced in the day of Jesus. How blessed were the prophets of the Lord who saw these things, though afar off; the sight weaned their affections from all earthly things; they sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. Oh, thanks be to my God, since I can call thee so; the belief of this, thy promise, produces as much heaven as I am able to bear while in the body. When Jacob blessed his sons, he spake of the coming of Shiloh, unto whom, saith he, shall the gathering of the people be. (See Gen. xlix. 10.) How exactly does this testimony of the patriarch agree with that of the apostle; "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be," "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ." We will hear what the prophet David says concerning the kingdom of Christ, Psalm lxxii. 11. "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." (Verse 14.) "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence." (Verse 17.) "And men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed." If any wish to argue that David meant no other than Solomon by the King's son, let them take notice of the 7th and 8th verses. "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to

sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." The moon yet endures, but the reign of Solomon does not. The kingdom spoken of in the text was to be universal; but Solomon's was not. Let us take particular notice of the 11th verse. "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him." Shall all the cruel tyrants of the earth bow down to him who was born in a stable? Shall all the haughty kings of proud and wealthy nations bow down to him whose chosen companions when on earth were poor fishermen? Will you, my opponent, say this is a pleasing doctrine to the carnal mind? Herod, who caused the massacre in Bethlehem, in order to murder Christ in infancy, could hardly be persuaded that it was agreeable to his carnal mind to bow before Jesus, at the head of this little band of martyrs. No, carnal mind must be crucified before all this can be done.

Would it please the present kings of Europe to tell them to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and to learn war no more? Would it be agreeable to their carnal, proud and haughty minds to submit to the religion of the Saviour? Which of them would, in order to gratify carnal-mindedness, abandon all his equipage, his horses and chariots of state, mount a forlorn ass, ride into an enemy's land, preach peace and salvation to his inveterate foes, die by cruel hands, and pray for his murderers in death? And can you believe that all the kings of the earth can bow down before the Saviour, with any more gratification to carnal-mindedness, than they could imitate him in his life and death?

"All nations shall serve him." If all nations serve Christ, will they not all be blessed in him according to the promise? I do not argue that any will be blessed in Christ who do not serve him; but the text says all nations shall serve him. (Psa. xxxvii. 10.) "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." (Verse 36.) "Yet he passed away, and he was not, yea I sought him, but he could not be found." If the wicked continue in sin as long as God exists, it appears to me to be improper to say, "Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be." And if God has prepared a place of endless torments for the wicked, and that in sight of the righteous in heaven, it is hardly proper to say, "Thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." And if the wicked are to be tormented forever, in sight of the righteous, why is it said, "I sought him but he could not be found"? (Psa. xxii. 27.) "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." Who will doubt the salvation of those who turn unto the Lord and worship before him? (See Psa. ii. 7, 8.) "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee: Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Compare this beautiful passage with one like it in Col. i. 19. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." In what a capacious Saviour did David believe! Should a

preacher at the present day recite the words which I have just quoted he would immediately be accused of holding the heretical doctrine of universal salvation, as his hearers might be pleased to call it; or should he communicate the doctrine half as clearly as it is communicated in those quotations, that part of his audience who were warmly opposed to the doctrine would grow uneasy, while those who favored the doctrine would be satisfied their speaker did so likewise. Some method must be used to explain those Scriptures differently from what they say, or the doctrine for which I contend is fairly proved by them.

Let us pass to the prophecies of Isaiah; see chap. xxv. 6, 7, 8. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." No one will doubt that the provisions here spoken of are those which are provided in the gospel of salvation.

In the first place, then, observe it is made for all people; this proves that it was the intention of him who made the feast that all people should share in its divine benefits.

Secondly. It is testified that the veil of darkness

which was over all people shall finally be taken away.

Thirdly. That death is to be swallowed up in victory, and tears wiped away from off all faces. And,

Lastly. That the rebuke of God's people should be taken from off all the earth. And the evidence given to prove it all would be done, is, the Lord hath spoken it.

It is of no avail for any to pretend that though the provisions of the gospel were provided for all people yet all will not partake of them, let the reasons be what they may; for if God wipe tears from off all faces, all must receive the benefits of gospel grace and peace. Compare this testimony with 1 Cor. xv. 54. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." Again, with Rev. xxi. 4. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." How can it be justly said that death is swallowed up in victory when the fact is death will reign as long as God exists? Or, how can it be said that God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of men, if millions are to mourn to an endless eternity? Or, why is it said there shall be no more sorrow, crying nor pain, if sorrow, crying and infinite pain are never to cease? Isaiah ix. 6, 7, the Saviour is prophesied of as possessing a kingdom, the increase of which should have no

end. To the same purpose, see, also, Daniel vii. 14. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Observe, "All people, nations, and languages shall serve him." If a great part of the human race are to exist in endless rebellion against Christ and his kingdom, it seems that the prophet was not only ignorant of it but believed the reverse. (Isaiah xlix. 6.) "And he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Verse 8.) "I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people," etc.

For the strength of this covenant, see Jer. xxxiii. 20. "Thus saith the Lord; if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant," etc.

When men are possessed of sufficient agency to stop the wheels of time, to silence the motion of the solar system, and to disannul God's covenant with day and night, then day and night will depend on the will of man. So, likewise, when he has agency to disannul that covenant which is ordered, and in all things sure, then his eternal salvation will depend on himself, and not on his God.

Attend to one similitude of the Redeemer's glory, from the prophecy of Ezek. xvii., last paragraph: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken, and have done it." Time would fail me to write one-half that might be quoted from the prophets on this subject. I ask for no explanation on their testimony; if what they say do not prove my doctrine, I will not have recourse to explanations.

I have reasoned from the goodness of God to prove that it is his will that all men should finally be holy and happy; I will now call proof from divine revelation to the same idea. See St. Paul's 1st Epistle to Timothy, ii. 4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." What could induce St. Paul to write this sentence if he did not believe it? My opponent will say he supposes Paul did believe it, and will acknowledge he believes it himself. Then, I say, all for which I argue is granted. But my opponent has a method by which

he can explain this passage so that it may be true, and yet God may will the endless misery of millions. It is only to say that the passage is expressive of God's revealed will, but not of his secret will, arguing that his revealed will is in direct opposition to a will which he has seen fit not to reveal!

Though much use is made of this method in order to shun the force of this passage and many others, if there be any propriety in it it is out of my sight; or if it would not betray a want of good sense in any other case I will leave my reader to judge.

To say God's revealed will is contrary to his eternal and unrevealed will, would in me be blasphemy of the first magnitude; yet I do not doubt the sincerity of those who frequently say it. But is it not in a direct sense charging God with hypocrisy? However shocking it may seem, I know of no other light in which to view it.

Again, if God have a will which he has not revealed, and my opponent knows what it is, I would ask how he came by this knowledge? God's revealed will is that all men should be saved, but his secret will is that most of them should be endlessly miserable! I would ask when this will was a secret? It has been openly talked of by limitarians ever since the light of the gospel advanced so as to discover the apostacy of Christians.

St. Paul speaks of the mystery of God's will which he proposed in himself, which the apostle says God has made known. See Eph. i. 9: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to

his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself." And in verse 10 he tells what this will is, but it is very different from what my opposer says the hidden will of God is: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth, even in him." St. Peter says God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance.

In short, I cannot see the propriety of saying that God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, if he predestinated from all eternity millions for endless misery; and if he created any to glorify him in endless torments, I cannot see why he should not be willing for them to perish, and answer the end for which he made them.

Again, what is that truth which God wills all men to know? According to the words of the text, it must be a truth consonant to their salvation, or they could not be saved and yet believe the truth. For instance, suppose out of the whole alphabet all are to be endlessly miserable except the vowel letters, and the whole alphabet was brought to the knowledge of the truth; surely the vowels would believe they were to be saved, but all the consonants would believe they were going into endless torments; and the faith of the consonants would be as true a faith as that of the vowels. But how could the consonants enjoy salvation while possessing this faith?

There are some who do not admit my general system who will admit this part of it, namely, that it is

the will of God that all men should finally be holy and happy, but say at the same time that it depends on the creature's accepting of offered mercy on the rational conditions of gospel obedience, making gospel obedience a prerequisition to salvation; while I contend that gospel obedience is, in fact, gospel salvation.

To be saved from sin is surely a gospel salvation, and to be obedient, according to the dictates of gospel grace, is salvation from sin. There is just as much propriety in making obedience a condition on which salvation is granted, as there would be for a physician to propose to a patient in a fit of the asthma that he would afford relief on condition the patient should first breathe easily. However, if it be granted that it is God's will that all men should finally be holy and happy, I will more directly answer the supposition that this will may fail by the words of St. Paul. See Eph. i. 11: "In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If God will have all men to be saved, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, it proves that for which I contend as fully as anything can be proved from Scripture. My opponent, perhaps, will say (as many have said to me in conversation) after meeting with much difficulty in arguing, "Anything may be proved by Scripture." To which I reply there is one thing that the Scriptures do not prove, neither can all the ingenuity of man make them substantiate it, and that is, the endless misery of a moral being.

If any of my opposers can prove, by Scripture, the endless duration of sin and misery, as plainly as the two passages above recited prove universal holiness and happiness, I will never contend any more on the subject.

I will take further notice of Paul's communication to Timothy. He goes on, in the 5th and 6th verses, to give Timothy a reason for what he had asserted; "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The apostle's reasoning is evidently good and plain; for God would not have given his Son a ransom for all, if it were not his will that all should be saved; and if it be God's will it ought to be ours, therefore it is right to pray for all. If the ransom were paid for all, it argues that it was the intention of the Ransomer that all should be benefitted.

What would have been the astonishment of the world, after the immortal Washington had caused to be paid a ransom for all the American prisoners who were in Algerine slavery, if he had told the Dey that he did not want more than one quarter of those captives sent home to the land of liberty and to the enjoyment of their families, for which they had so long sighed in bondage; and that he might wear out the rest with fatigue and whips? But the good man's soul was never satisfied until they all came home, and with songs of joyous liberty hailed the land of their nativity! And blessed be the Captain of our salvation; he, also, shall see of the travail of his soul and

be satisfied, when all the "ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads, when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The reader's attention is now invited to those Scriptures which, in expression, are more particularly applicable to the deliverance of mankind from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The whole of the 15th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians was intended to refute those who denied the resurrection; but as that doctrine is not denied by my opponent, I shall take notice only of those parts which affect the argument between us. (See verse 20.) "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Christ, as the first fruits of them who slept, is represented by the heave-offering under the law. (See Num. xv. 19, 20.) "Then it shall be that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave-offering unto the Lord. Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough, for an heave-offering: as ye do the heave-offering of the threshing-floor, so shall ye heave it." (Exod. xxii. 29.) "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors; the first born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me." (See, also, Num. xviii. 15.) By the offering of the first ripe fruits, the whole of the succeeding harvest was sanctified; and in the first born which were redeemed, the succeeding fruits of the womb were con-

sidered holy. (See Acts xxvi. 23.) "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead." Christ being the first who rose from the dead, and rising as the first fruits, sanctifies all the rest, as did the first fruits under the law. St. Paul's comment on first fruits is very illustrative of the scriptural meaning thereof. (See Rom. ix. 16.) "For if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy so are the branches."

In the heave-offering under the law there is a beautiful representation of our Saviour. The sheaf taken from the field, being separated from all the rest of the same growth, represents the separation of Jesus Christ from mankind to be holy unto the Lord; and the sanctification of the whole harvest, being by the first ripe fruits, is to show us that our sanctification is in Jesus, the first fruits of them that slept. The same may be clearly seen in the instance of the dough; a certain part of it was to be separated from the rest for an offering unto the Lord in which the remaining part of the lump (as the apostle calls it) was considered holy.

These observations are made here in order to draw the reader's attention more closely to the labors of the apostle which we have under consideration; for he goes on immediately to show what he means by the lump spoken of in Romans. (See verse 21.) "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

Let me here observe that death came by the earthly man, and the resurrection came by the heavenly man, which is in point to prove that the plan of the gospel

is to deliver mankind from the earthly Adam to the immortality of the heavenly.

Perhaps none would dispute what I here contend for, provided I did not extend the cure as extensively as the malady; but I shall also contend for this, and will clearly prove it by the apostle's testimony. (See verse 22.) "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It is not possible for me to state the doctrine more concise and positive than the apostle has done in the passage quoted. But I am willing to attend to my opponent's objections as I proceed. He will say he does not dispute that the apostle here meant all mankind, but that he only intended they would all be raised from the dead, not that all would be delivered from condemnation and sin. But I will rest my argument on the words themselves; I say, if all men are made alive in Christ, they cannot be said to be out of Christ dead or alive, sinful or holy.

The present state of our being is derived from Adam, the earthly nature; and, in a natural sense, we are all in him. Our future state of existence we derive entirely from the heavenly nature; and, therefore, it is said all shall be made alive in Christ. The apostle goes on still further to show the order of the before-mentioned work, arguing, from the first fruits the whole family of mankind. (See 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, 25.) "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority

and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Christ is here again spoken of as the first fruits, in the order of the resurrection, which consists of three parts.

First. Of Christ himself, who was the first that rose from the dead.

Secondly. Those who are Christ's at his coming, which coming I will not endeavor to point out, as it makes nothing in respect to the particular argument in which I am at present engaged.

Thirdly. The coming of the end, which cannot be until he hath put down all rule, authority and power, and every enemy has submitted; at which time the Mediator delivers up the kingdom to God the Father.

Then shall the great work of reconciliation be finished, and the labors of the Redeemer completed with immortal honor. Then shall all the millions of the human race be reconciled to God through Christ, and shall sing; see Rev. v. 11, 12, 13, 14. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; singing with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessings. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.

And the four beasts said, amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down, and worshipped him that liveth forever and ever."

The reader will observe that ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, beasts and elders, first declare the Lamb, who had been slain, to be worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessings; then every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, say, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Then the elders and beasts, who first pronounced him thus worthy, fell down and worshipped him who liveth forever and ever.

There is nothing in all the sacred writings more astonishingly beautiful than this account; neither do I think it possible for the imagination to paint anything half so grand and sublime. I am all astonishment. To realize by faith the accomplishment of this glorious prediction transcends every other thought or idea of which the mind is susceptible.

There is no room for my opponent to argue against the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness while this passage of divine truth lies in sight. There are no expressions left out of this passage that would make it more extensive.

May I not ask my opposer if he be not willing to acknowledge what mysterious powers have acknowledged, that Christ, the dear Lamb who hath been slain,

is worthy to receive as extensive worship as is declared in the passage quoted?

When the four beasts and the elders saw universal nature bending before the object of their worship, they immediately fell down, anxious to excel, and worshipped him who liveth forever and ever. If my opponent thinks Christ is not worthy of so much worship, he thinks less of him than *I* do, and less than I wish *he* did.

There are yet remaining many passages in the 15th of Corinthians which are in point to prove what I am contending for, even more than is at this time necessary to introduce. A few more, however, may be proper, with some few remarks. (See verse 28.) "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

What must we understand by all things being subdued unto him? Will any one say all that is meant by it is that Christ will then have power over all men whereby he can reward the righteous and torment the wicked? When did he not possess this power? When were not all things in subjection to Christ enough for those purposes? The subjection of all things to Christ must mean something, and it is reasonable to believe that it means the reconciliation of the heart to holiness. Can a soul in sin, employed in blaspheming the Incommunicable Name, be said to be in subjection to Christ in any way that answers to the text? I do not think any will contend for it.

The only subjection which is acceptable to Christ is a broken and contrite heart, which he will not despise. The plan, then, of the gospel is universal submission to Christ in holiness and happiness.

The delivery of the kingdom of Christ to the Father is declared in the last clause of the passage quoted, of which I have before taken notice in this work, in order to show the dependence of Christ on the Eternal and Self-existent. Then, it is said, "God shall be all in all." In what sense will God be all in all at the close of the Redeemer's process that he is not now, or always was? Answer, he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. When all men are brought to love God supremely, and their fellow-creatures as themselves, it will then be manifest that we are nothing only as we exist in God; therefore, God will be all. And as the eternal spirit of love, which is the governing principle of the heavenly man, will be the governing principle of each soul thus reconciled to the law of love, it may justly be said that God is in all. (See verses 47, 48, 49.) "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." As we have all been partakers of the earthy Adam, so, the apostle argues, we shall be partakers, in the resurrection, of the Second Adam, whom he calls the Lord from heaven. (See verses 51, 52, 53, 54.) "Behold, I will show you a mystery; we

shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory."

If death, sin and sorrow are to remain as long as God exists, how can it be said death is swallowed up in victory? If the apostle believed any part of the family of man would finally be excluded from the blessings of the gospel, why did he not just hint something of it in this account of the close of the Mediatorial kingdom? Did he consider it a matter of too small moment to mention? If he did, he is inexcusable for precluding the idea by plain and positive testimony. See his conclusion, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." If sin remain without end, it being the sting of death, when the question is asked, "O death, where is thy sting?" sin may answer, "Here I am and here I will be in spite of him who undertook to destroy the works of the devil, and here I will boast of my power as long as he does of his, whom angels adore, and I hate!" (Phil. iii. 21.) "Who shall change our vile body, that it

may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Observe, "Who shall change our vile body." In a former quotation it is said, "we shall all be changed;" and in the present passage it is said, "whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In a former quotation it is said, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him."

Let us hear what our blessed Lord himself says in respect to his mission. (St. John v. 22, 23.) "For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." In the sense in which this passage was spoken, it is evident that the sinner does neither honor the Father nor the Son, and the plain testimony of the text is that all men should honor both. Compare this with Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." As in the other passage the exaltation of the Saviour is first spoken of, and then the grand intention in his exaltation shown; so in this; there it is for the purpose that all men should honor him; and here it is that unto him every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Of this glorious and soul-reviving truth the prophet Isaiah was not ignorant, but speaks of it most clearly (see chap. xlv. 22, 23, 24, 25). "Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." The reader will observe I have left out some supplied words in the above quotation, by which the passage reads without ambiguity.

Had the inspired prophet been possessed of an accurate knowledge of the dispute in which I am engaged, I do not see how he could have written a sentence more pertinently to my argument; and I have not a doubt but the Spirit intended the passage for the same purpose for which I have used it.

St. Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, shows the extent of redemption in so strong terms as to admit of no possible evasion (v. 22, 23). "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

If the reader will be at the trouble of examining this passage with its connection, that for which I contend will appear plainly proved by it.

There is no end to proofs of universal reconciliation to God; for everything of a moral nature testifies it, and all material nature is a figure of it. The ministry of reconciliation, which, St. Paul says, was committed to himself and others, is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses. The truth of Christ's dying for all is the foundation of the apostle's argument on this subject; which truth, the apostle says, he was constrained to believe by the love of Christ; for thus saith he, "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 14, etc.)

I may as well stop here as anywhere, for as I just said, there is no end; and if those Scriptures which I have quoted be true, that which I have endeavored to prove is proved; but if they be not, more of the same testimony would prove nothing.

There is but one method left for my opponent by which he can further oppose me; and that is, by denying the whole system of divine revelation and man's susceptibility of rational ideas. But as that would equally destroy all for which he would contend, he will undoubtedly be cautious.

We now see clearly that it is God's will, according

to his eternal purpose, purposed in himself, that all men should finally be holy and happy; that it was the intention of the Saviour's mission; that the prophets, by the spirit of prophecy, long foresaw this universal and godlike glorious plan of grace; that every good principle in man stands up in testimony of so divine a system, that the happiness of all moral beings is wrapped up in the glorious issue of the ministration of reconciliation, and that it is, in reality, opposed by none, but by unreconciled beings, unholy principles, and unlawful desires. And shall we say that the eternal good will of him who dwelt in the bush must fail at last? Must the testimony of the prophets fall to the ground? Must the captain of our salvation, who warred in righteousness, who reddened his garments in his own blood, who bore the sins of the world, and suffered death in agony, to obtain his lawful inheritance, be robbed of them at last? Were this believed in heaven the royal diadem would fall from the head of him whom all heaven adores, and the highest archangel would faint away! But, blessed be the Lord, and blessed be his truth, its divine power shall cause the Leviathan of infidelity to bite the ground, shall rend the veil which is cast over all nations, and shall more and more manifest divine righteousness and the name in which it is found, in which name alone is salvation. In the days of the apostles, the greatest object in preaching the gospel of Christ was to prove him to be the Saviour of the world, the true Messiah of the law, urging that he died for all, that he made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but had

broken down the partition-wall between them, for the glorious purpose of making of the twain one new man in everlasting fellowship and eternal peace. But how hath the gold changed, how hath the most fine gold become dim? The main apparent object, at the present day, is to prove the object of the Saviour's mission, as it respects the salvation of sinners, extremely limited, and that but few of the human race will finally be the redeemed of the Lord to the praise of his glory; that the great adversary of righteousness will obtain a much larger conquest of souls than Christ himself; and, oh, shocking to name, eternal justice is profaned by being called to assist the serpent's designs in the endless duration of sin and rebellion against God! Those whom the Lord hath blessed with a belief of universal holiness and happiness are proscribed as heretics, infidels, offscourings of the earth, friends to nothing but sin, and enemies to nothing but God and holiness; opening a door to licentiousness of every abominable species, destroyers of the pure religion of Christ, and nuisances to society. But is it, in reality, manifesting a love to sin to argue its total destruction by the power of divine righteousness? Is it manifesting enmity against God and the religion of Jesus to contend for the propriety of all men's serving him in holiness and happiness? And are we nuisances to society because we endeavor to persuade all men to love God and one another? Can these things be displeasing to him who was born in Bethlehem? Will he not rather greatly bless such labors, though performed by those as little esteemed in the

world as were the poor fishermen who left their nets and followed the despised Nazarene?

Let us ask a few questions. Which reflects the most honor on the divine character, to contend it was necessary for him to create millions of rational creatures to hate him and every divine communication he makes to them to all eternity, to live in endless rebellion against him, and endure inconceivable torments as long as God exists, or to suppose him able and willing to make all his rational creatures love and adore him, yield obedience to his divine law, and exist in union and happiness with himself?

Which reflects most honor on the Saviour, to say that but few will obtain salvation by him, and though he died for all men, yet his death will benefit but few, or to say with the prophet, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, having reconciled all things to God, through the peace made by the blood of the cross?"

If there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance, which would yield the most joy to the heavenly hosts, the repentance of one-fourth of mankind or the whole? If the servants of Christ here on earth desire the increase of holiness and the decrease of sin, which would be most agreeable to such a desire, the belief that the greatest part of mankind will grow more and more sinful to all eternity, or to believe that sin will continually decrease, and righteousness increase, until the former is wholly destroyed and the latter becomes universal?

To answer the above questions so as to favor my opponent's argument, is more than any one would be willing to do; and which, if done, would involve an endless train of ideas too glaringly absurd to be supported. But to answer them agreeably to the nature of divine truth opens to infinite beauties, more serene than the morning and more glorious than the noonday. God, the fountain of living waters and the essence of eternal life, is seen by faith in Jesus the same to all rational beings, the author, supporter, and blesser of them. Christ Jesus, the head of every man, is beheld as the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of his person, through whom the Eternal hath manifested the riches of his grace, the eternal councils of his love to the world, brought life and immortality to light, and manifested our eternal sonship in the second Adam. Each holy desire, as the fruit of the Spirit in the souls of those who believe, feasts on the rich promises of Abraham's God, believing him faithful who hath promised. Heaven hath already received the heave offering of the first ripe fruits, and the fields are white, ready to harvest. O ye laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, be ye not idle. What an extensive field is here in which for the mind to expand and send its desires abroad! The transcendent beauties of salvation have visited the dark regions of mortality, as light and heat from the vernal sun visits the cold and dark north, turning frozen lands into fruitful fields, taking the icy fetters from limpid streams which bend their course to the fountain, bringing the time of the singing

of birds, and causing the voice of the turtle to be heard.

"I am come," says Jesus, "to send a fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?" All the passages which allude to a dispensation of fire which I have observed in this work are direct evidences to prove the destruction of sin and all sinful works, the purification of sinners, and their eternal reconciliation to holiness and happiness. This fire will either overcome sin or be overcome by it. But who will argue the latter? If none, then let the former be acknowledged. If you say these things appear differently from what you expected they would before your inquiry, and you find something more interesting than tradition has taught you; if you feel soft in your mind towards the so-much-despised doctrine of universal holiness and happiness; if you can believe heaven large enough to contain mankind, and begin to breathe in the air of unbounded benevolence, and feel faith mingled with your desires for the destruction of sin and the increase of holiness, then come still further. The knowledge of these things is progressive, and obtained only by degrees. I give you my hand in token of love and friendship, and my heart in all faithfulness is yours. Let us still go on and view the heavenly beauties yet to be unfolded in the plan of the gospel. I well know there are many difficulties to be surmounted. To profess universal salvation will subject some to excommunication from regular churches; others to the pain of being neglected by their neighbors; others to be violently opposed by

their companions; and in many instances, undoubtedly, the father will be against the son and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; and a man's enemies may be those of his own house. But can such difficulties excuse us for not owning him who for us bore the cross and despised the shame? All denominations since the world began have experienced some difficulties in their first establishment. Christ and his apostles wrestled hard and encountered great opposition, even to the loss of all earthly things, with life itself. Since the apostacy the denominations which arose out of popery have, in thousands of instances, suffered more than duty calls us to suffer in a land of liberty and toleration. But some will say there are none who profess the doctrine in my vicinity except some of the lower class of people, and if I rank myself with them my titles of honor will do me no good, and my road to the temple of fame will be forever intercepted. Some will say to themselves, I must believe the doctrine; I cannot argue against it, but I will say nothing about it lest I should be mistrusted. I would gladly embrace the opportunity which Nicodemus did, who went to Jesus by night, but to come out boldly to the knowledge of the world is too great a sacrifice. Says another, I am convinced of the truth of the doctrine, but I have preached so much against it, have warned my hearers so much to shun that heresy, I am now ashamed to tell them I believe it. Another feels so dependent on his neighbors he wishes to have them go forward first. All these circumstances, and many

more, bear great weight with various persons, in various circumstances, causing great labor of mind, and those who are under such influences may be said to be heavy laden. I know of no better remedy for those cases than an attention to the exhortation of Christ, who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The reader may judge from those circumstances whether this doctrine be pleasing to the carnal mind, as its enemies say. Was it pleasing to the Pharisees of old to be taught by Christ and his disciples that publicans and harlots should enter the kingdom of heaven before them? Yes, just as pleasing to their carnal minds as it is to a professed preacher of Christ, who can thank God that he is better than other men, to tell him that those upon whom he looks as much viler than himself stand in no more need of pardon than he does. St. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, undoubtedly looked on the doctrine of Christ to be exactly calculated to please wicked men, as the most part of those who were disciplined by it were publicans and sinners, and he well knew that the foundation of their hope was the forgiveness of sin. This he despised, as did many of his equals in the Jewish religion; feeling themselves whole, they felt no need of a physician. They supposed the gospel to be a doctrine every way calculated to vitiate and immoralize mankind. Undoubtedly the Pharisees often

said of the disciples of Christ, their religion is perfectly suited to their characters; they are sinners and know not the law, and they have contrived a very easy way to get to heaven. But if we ask St. Paul, after his conversion, what he thought of these things, he would undoubtedly give a very different account. For when the Lord met him in the way, and gave him to understand his real character, and what he was doing, he was astonished, and fell to the earth. His sins were set in order before him, and his soul was greatly troubled. In this situation, he learned the necessity of the doctrine which he had despised, experienced the necessity of its pardoning mercy, and became as willing to endure persecution for its sake as he had been to persecute it before.

When it is understood that gospel salvation is salvation from carnal-mindedness and all its relative ills, to a reconciliation to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, if all men were thus saved, it would not be argued that it is pleasing to the carnal mind. As the doctrine for which I contend is entirely the reverse of carnal-mindedness, so it is equally opposed to licentiousness; for what can be a stronger restraint on the passions than a belief in God's universal goodness, and that all men are the objects of his mercy? Such a belief, when it has its proper effects in the mind, raises a supreme affection for God, and kindles the sacred fire of love and unbounded benevolence to mankind. If any would dispute me on my statement of the consequences of this faith, I have greatly the advantage. As my opponent does not possess this

faith, he cannot tell the effects of it so well as one can who does. However, I will not make use of that advantage, having argument in my power that is more than sufficient. Let my adversary state his argument, that we may see the strength of it. The fact is, he has no argument; he can only assert, "the doctrine is not productive of love to God or man, but the reverse, and if he believed it he would commit every sin that was in his power." Is it hard to see that my opponent has made a very fair and full profession of his love to sin in room of his love to God, and a strong desire to injure his fellow-men in room of serving them in love? What was the elder brother angry for? At what did he grumble? And why did he refuse to go into his father's house? Because the father had received the prodigal and treated him kindly. At what did the laborers grumble who bore the burden and heat of the day? Because those who had wrought but one hour received as much as they, and received their money first. At what did the Pharisees and scribes murmur when they saw all the publicans and sinners come to Jesus to hear him? Because he did not condemn them to hopeless despair, but kindly received them. At what do my opposers rage? At what are they dissatisfied? Not because I exclude them from any privilege or blessing of the gospel. What then? I am sorry to name it. It is because I extend those blessings further, and hope they will do more good than what suits them!

As the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness opens an infinite field in which for the mind to expa-

tiate, and learn the goodness of God in all his works and providence, it is the most animating to a benevolent soul of any that was ever believed in our world, and lays the broadest foundation for exhortation to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live sober, righteous, and godly lives. How strong are the inducements, from such glorious views of God and his mercy, to lead us to imitate such unbounded goodness in all our intentions and actions. And being fully convinced that our happiness is in union with our duty, those who fully believe in the consequences of atonement, as I have argued them, will see the propriety of my endeavoring to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, exhorting them to good works in all faithfulness, in whatever situation duty may call us, or whatever the part may be which our heavenly Father hath called us to act in his divine and delightsome service. The duty enjoined on the believer of this doctrine is as much more extensive than the duty enjoined by any other faith as the faith itself is more extensive; and its delights are so likewise. If a poor man was offered a thousand pounds for a day's labor it would undoubtedly be a very strong inducement to him to labor. But, it is to be observed, in this case, that it is not the labor itself which is the object, but the large sum of money with which the laborer expects to be rewarded. It is not the labor in which the man delights; could he obtain his money without the work it would be his choice. But when the labor itself is all the enjoyment, and the whole object is obedience, the laborer will not wish the time short or the duty

small; no, eternity is none too long for the soul to contemplate laboring in the endless delights of obedience to his God.

Those who believe a future state of happiness depends on certain duties performed by them undoubtedly intend to do those duties some time before they die; and it is often said that a procrastination of those duties on which so much depends is dangerous, as life is uncertain; yet they had rather let it alone until old age deprives them of the common comforts of life; at which time they may about as well be employed in the dull and disagreeable task of being good as anything else. But those who consider their duty as their meat and drink ought not to need much inviting to feed on dainties so rich. We should hardly believe a man to be in his right mind who, for eating a good meal of victuals, should charge the price of it. "In keeping thy commandments there is great reward." By these observations the reader will see how needful it is for us at all times to attend to our duty, because "now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation;" to every willing and obedient soul who feels the power of atoning grace salvation is present. Truly it is said of wisdom, "She hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." God, in infinite wisdom, has constituted all moral beings so that their duty is their happiness, and strict obedience fulness of joy. Why, then, my brethren, shall we starve? Why live poor? Why should we be so parsimonious of

those heavenly stores that can never be exhausted? "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." God forbids none; "the Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth, say, come; and whoever will, let him take of the fountain of the water of life freely." Remember the salvation which God wills is a salvation from sin. Then, as much as you desire salvation, you will wish to avoid sin and wickedness. There are none who would say they did not want salvation; but how many are there who say they want it by their own conduct! No man understandingly wants salvation any further than he wants more holiness.

The Universalist, who is really so, prizes his duty as his heaven, as his peace, and his most sublime enjoyment. How, then, shall we be so lost, so blind, and so deceived as to wish to shun our duty and our happiness? If we really believe those things, and desire that others may be brought to see and believe the same, let us endeavor, in the first place, to prove to all men that such a belief is of real service in cultivating our morals and in regulating our behavior. And, secondly, by using our abilities as God hath given, in cool dispassionate reasoning, with those who do not believe; contending for nothing but the pure principles of love, in meekness and all gentleness. Never argue for will sake, nor for mastery: and, shunning every appearance of sophistry, never suffer yourselves to be anxious about the issue

of conversation; but speak the words of truth and soberness, and leave the event to be directed by the spirit of God. Falsehood is so apt to detect itself that an argument is generally best conducted when the disputant is refuted by consequences arising from his own statements: and if he cannot see and understand them for himself, it will do no good to see them for him. If we can see for ourselves we do well. If the Lord of the harvest hath graciously been pleased to call you by his grace to preach the word of his gospel to his purchased possession; to sound abroad the trumpet of salvation, and to feed the sheep and lambs of the one true shepherd, then remember that it is required of stewards that they are found faithful. St. Paul declared himself a debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians, to the wise and the unwise. He having received a dispensation of the gospel, the grace of which belonged to all men, he thereby became a debtor to all: And if we have received a dispensation of the same gospel, we are debtors to all whom this gospel concerns. How happy is a friend who has good news to communicate to his companions: and surely it is an office much to be desired to carry good news to the distressed. See the officer when he reads a pardon to one who expects immediate death: his soul bursts through his eyes in streams of joy while he pronounces the words which give life to the dead. But how much more excellent are the labors of those whose feet are beautiful on the mountains, who publish peace in the Redeemer's name, even glad tidings unto all people. Much watchfulness

is necessary, lest the law of the carnal or old man gets the government of the mind. I will venture to say, there never was a preacher more ready, on all occasions, than the old man which we are exhorted to put off; he is willing at all times to assist, never waiting to be called. He has no objections to preaching about Christ, if Christ be not preached. He is perfectly willing to say that salvation is all of God, and that Christ is a whole Saviour; but, then, it is indispensably necessary that he should do something, such as asking, seeking, knocking; or, if it be only accepting of offered mercy, is all he wants. It may be, the reader will wonder a little at what I here say, as I have just quoted the exhortation, to ask, to seek, to knock, etc.; but I wish to be understood that we must ask, seek, and knock, not in the name or nature of the earthly Adam, but in the name and nature of the heavenly man. The old serpent, the devil, is never better pleased than when he can do something which he thinks lays God under some obligation to him. If the carnal or old man get so baffled as to be reduced to give up his influence respecting our eternal life in Jesus, he will immediately propose, in his struggles, that all he can do is to insure a blessed state for some considerable time after we die, say, for a thousand years, or any given time; then all must depend on the Saviour. If the earthly Adam can get us up Jacob's ladder a few steps, he is willing that Christ should do something by and by. Now, the object of all those devices, of which we are not ignorant (as St. Paul says) is to keep us in the service of the flesh; but remember

he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. A Pharisee, who feels as if something was coming to him more than others receive, perhaps will not be scrupulous about the exact quantity. He only wishes to have proper attention paid him; if he can flatter himself with a higher seat in heaven than those are to have on whom he looks as worse than himself it satisfies his carnal pride. Perhaps a period of punishment for sinners, after death, in which they may be justly corrected for not being so good and holy as this Pharisee, would give him much satisfaction. He would then be willing to have the poor wretches delivered from absolute misery and enjoy some small conveniences. Oh, how hard it is to be a humble disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus! It is death to carnal mind. If I preach the gospel all my life long, spend all my time and strength for the good of mankind and the honor of my Saviour, shall I not have something more hereafter than one who has mocked and derided me? Answer, if I have, in truth and meekness, preached Christ, and have been faithful in his cause, ought I not to be thankful that he has enabled me so to do? Have I been the loser unless I am paid in the world to come, by having some privilege granted me which another may not enjoy? Oh, blush, my soul, if thy follies rise so high. No, every moment's faithfulness has been supplied with streams of divine consolation; and it ought to be remembered that the preacher never refreshes others unless he himself is refreshed. If I have professed to preach Christ, but have preached myself in room of him, undoubtedly

I may think there is something coming, as my living has been very poor while I have thus labored; but the truth is my reward has been equal to my service. I am willing to acknowledge that carnal mind often contends that I have done so well, I ought, in consequence, to expect high approbations; and I begin to look down on those whom I fancy of less magnitude. But, oh, the viperous sting! Well might an apostle say, "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Says the same apostle, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Upon what high advantages did he calculate above those who were much less in labor than himself?

But, says the reader, will not St. Paul fare better than the worst of sinners in eternity? Judge from what he says: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." The more humble we are the greater our enjoyments. But when all are completely humbled, and perfectly reconciled; when all old things are done away, and all things become new; when he who sitteth upon the throne maketh all things new in deed and in truth, I believe all strife concerning who shall be great in the kingdom of heaven will be at an end. Ye who preach righteousness in the great congregations of the people, forget not the exhortation of the Captain of our salvation, "Learn of me." What good will all

our labors do unless we learn of Christ? If we learn of him, he will be unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and we shall preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord, and ourselves the servants of the people, for Jesus' sake. Remember, again, the exhortation of him who is the leader and commander of the people, "Search the Scriptures." Make yourselves acquainted with, and have free recourse to, this great storehouse of divine riches, that you may be ready to "deal a portion to seven, and also to eight." "Ye are the salt of the earth." As salt preserves and seasons meats so that they are acceptable, so ought the ministers of righteousness to endeavor, as far as possible, to preserve mankind from sin, that they may be acceptable members of the church of Christ. "But if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." We cannot be profitable to others unless we have the savor of the Spirit within us. This lost and we are good for nothing, and in room of having a mouth, and wisdom, to put gainsayers to silence, we shall be overcome by them, and they will tread us under their feet. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," but be sure to remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God." Carnal mind frequently urges the necessity of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but then we must contend in a coat of mail, and with the weapons of him who sought the life of the Son of Jesse. Be

prepared to meet every kind of opposition. We must be attacked on every side. The adversary will not leave one stone unturned, nor a weapon in his armor untried. Be cautious of any system of divinity. Remember "the path of the just is a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The moment we fancy ourselves infallible, every one must come to our peculiarities or we cast them away. Even the truth may be held in unrighteousness. Daniel's God was undoubtedly the true God, but I do not conceive Darius any more the real friend of that God when he made a decree that all people should worship him, than he was when he made the decree that no petition should be asked of any God or man for thirty days, save of himself. The cause of truth wants nothing in its service but the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. All the divisions and subdivisions which now exist among Christians, or ever have existed, were caused wholly by the want of those graces. Should we be tenacious about certain sentiments and peculiarities of faith, the time is not far distant when Universalists, who have suffered every kind of contemptuous treatment from the enemies of the doctrine, will be at war among themselves, and be trodden under foot of the Gentiles. Having begun in the Spirit, do not think to be made perfect by the flesh. In order to imitate our Saviour, let us, like him, have compassion on the ignorant, and those whom we view to be out of the way. Attend to the exhortation, "Let brotherly love continue." If we

agree in brotherly love, there is no disagreement that can do us any injury, but if we do not, no other agreement can do us any good. Let us keep a strict guard against the enemy "that sows discord among brethren." Let us endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." May charity, that heaven-born companion of the human heart, never forsake us; and may the promise of the Saviour be fulfilled concerning us, "Lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world."

You have now, kind reader, cast your eye over these pages; perhaps you feel to say, "the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness cannot be true, notwithstanding all the author has said in favor of it;" and if so, I condemn you not. The time has been when I believed as little of the doctrine as you now do; I never adopted the belief of universal holiness and happiness out of choice, but from the force of real or supposed evidence. And I know you cannot believe it on any other ground. I hope, however, you feel no enmity to so glorious a system of God's grace; I hope you have the spirit of Christ, and wish well to mankind. I have, be sure, great consolation in believing that my Redeemer has many faithful servants and loving disciples in the world who do not believe in the extensiveness of salvation as I do, and I often take great satisfaction in feasts of charity with such brethren. St. Peter was undoubtedly a lover of Christ and his gospel before he was taught by the sea of Joppa to call no man common or unclean. The rest of the disciples who were dissatisfied with his

preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised, were doubtless possessed of the spirit of Christ, which caused them to glorify God when they had more extensive views of the gospel through Peter's communications. As far as I see men walk in the spirit of love to God and one another I feel an union with them, whether their particular sentiments are mine or not. Men cannot believe at will; we believe as evidence appears to our mind. The times have been when each denomination has been proscribed and, in some measure, persecuted. Each as it rose has been censured by those who could not fall in with their doctrine; and what does all this condemning one another prove, only the imperfections of all, and the badness of the human heart? You will not think evil of me, kind reader, if I exhort you not to feel too hard against what you may find to be your duty to acknowledge. It grieved Peter when his Lord asked him the third time if he loved him, as he had denied him thrice. There are many Universalists now who have frequent occasion to confess how hard they have been against the doctrine, and how much they have spoken unadvisedly with their lips against what they now rejoice to believe is truth, and humbly adore the Saviour of sinners for opening their eyes to behold such unspeakable beauties. If you attend to the exhortation, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, undoubtedly you may see more of the riches of his goodness than you now do. The prophet Ezekiel's knowledge of the holy waters was progressive, and obtained by degrees. When he

was first led into the waters they were only to his ankles; but he went still further and they were to his knees; he went still further and they were to his loins; he went further and the waters were risen, waters for men to swim in, a river that no man could pass. Had the prophet refused to travel in these waters after he first entered them he would not have known nor believed them to be so multitudinous as they were. A soul, in the earliest moments of heavenly love, is first unspeakably charmed with the untold beauties and graces of his Redeemer; next, wife, children, father, mother, brothers, sisters, all friends, directly enemies, and finally all mankind are embraced in the extended arms of heavenly love and divine benevolence.

I close this work, humbly hoping and expecting the glorious increase and extensive growth of what I have (though feebly) contended for; namely, the holiness and happiness of mankind. I look with strong expectation for that period when all sin and every degree of unreconciliation will be destroyed by the divine power of that love which is stronger than death, which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown; in which alone I put my trust, and in which my hope is anchored for all mankind; earnestly praying that the desire of the righteous may not be cut off.

The fulness of times will come, and the times of the the restitution of all things will be accomplished. Then shall truth be victorious, and all error flee to eternal night. Then shall universal songs of honor be sung to the praise of him who liveth forever and ever. All death, sorrow and crying, shall be done away;

pains and disorders shall b no more felt, temptations no more trouble the lovers of God, nor sin poison the human heart. The blessed hand of the once crucified shall wipe tears from off all faces. O, transporting thought! Then shall the blessed Saviour see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, when, through his mediation, universal nature shall be brought in perfect union with truth and holiness, and the spirit of God fill all rational beings. Then shall the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which maketh free from the law of sin, become the governing principle of the whole man once made subject to vanity, once enthralled in darkness, sin and misery, but then delivered from the bondage of corruption, and restored to perfect reconciliation to God in the heavenly Adam. Then shall the great object of the Saviour's mission be accomplished. Then shall the question be asked, "O death, where is thy sting?" But death shall not be to give the answer. And, "O grave, where is thy victory?" But the boaster shall be silent. The Son shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father; the eternal radiance shall smile, and God shall be all in all.

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